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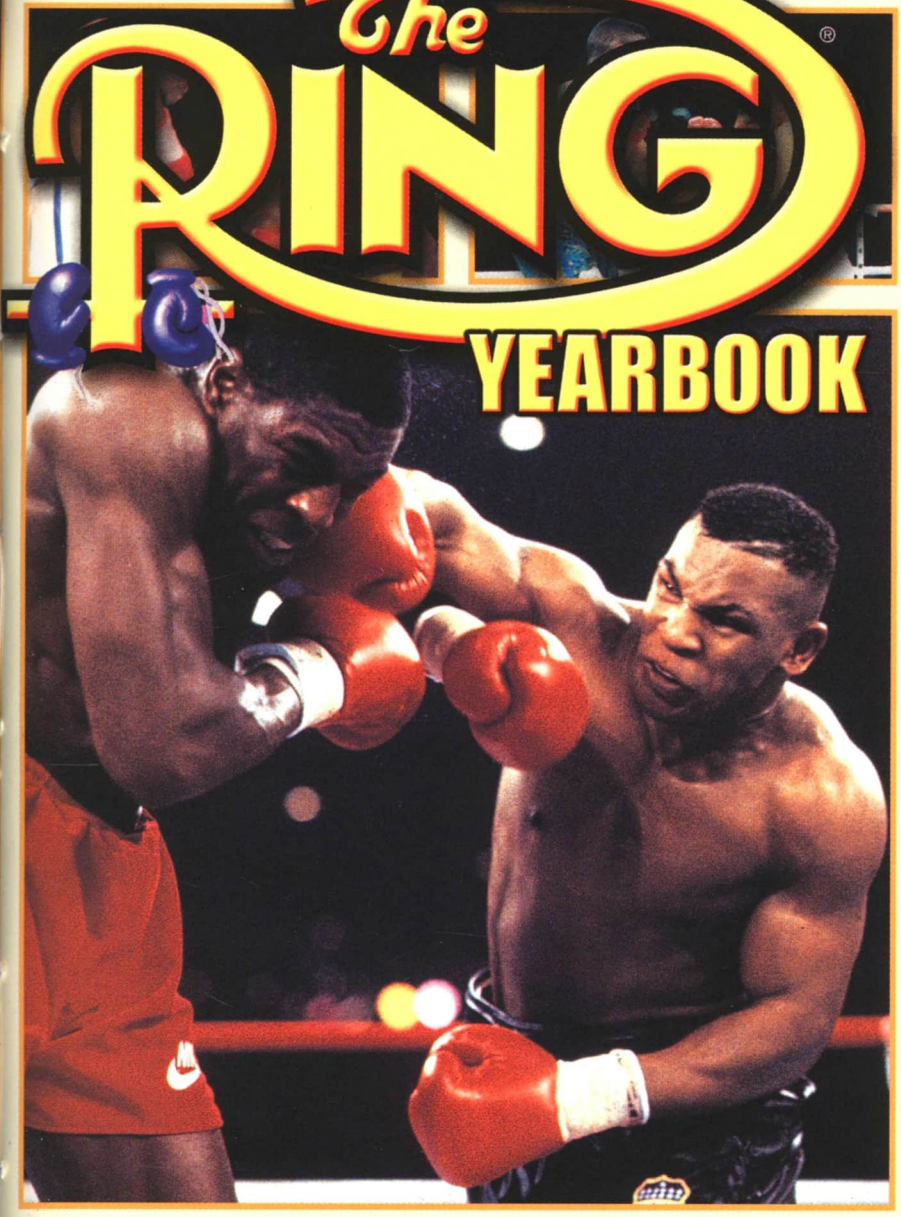

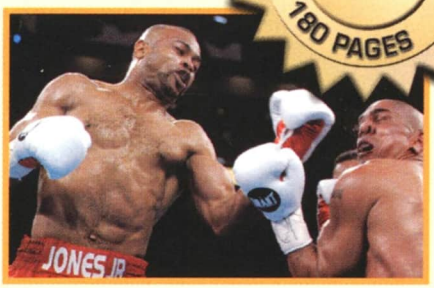

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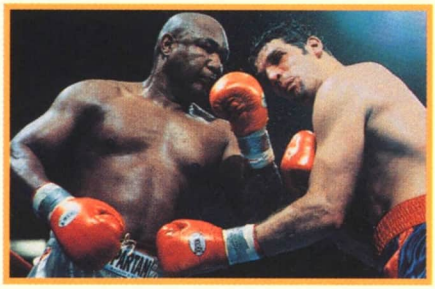

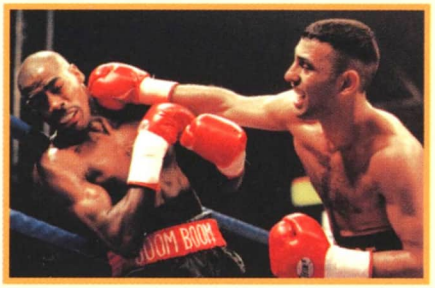

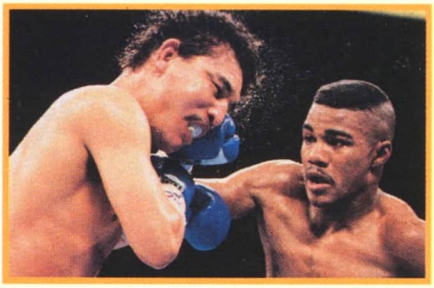

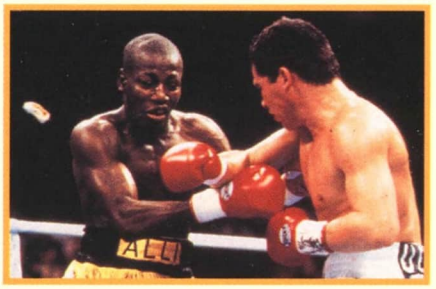

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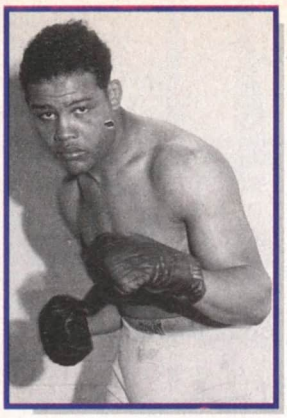

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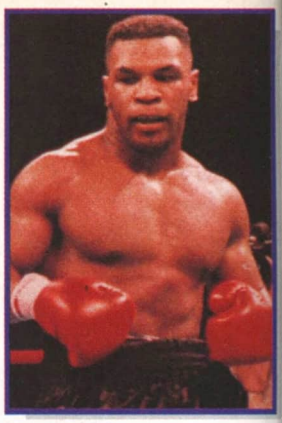

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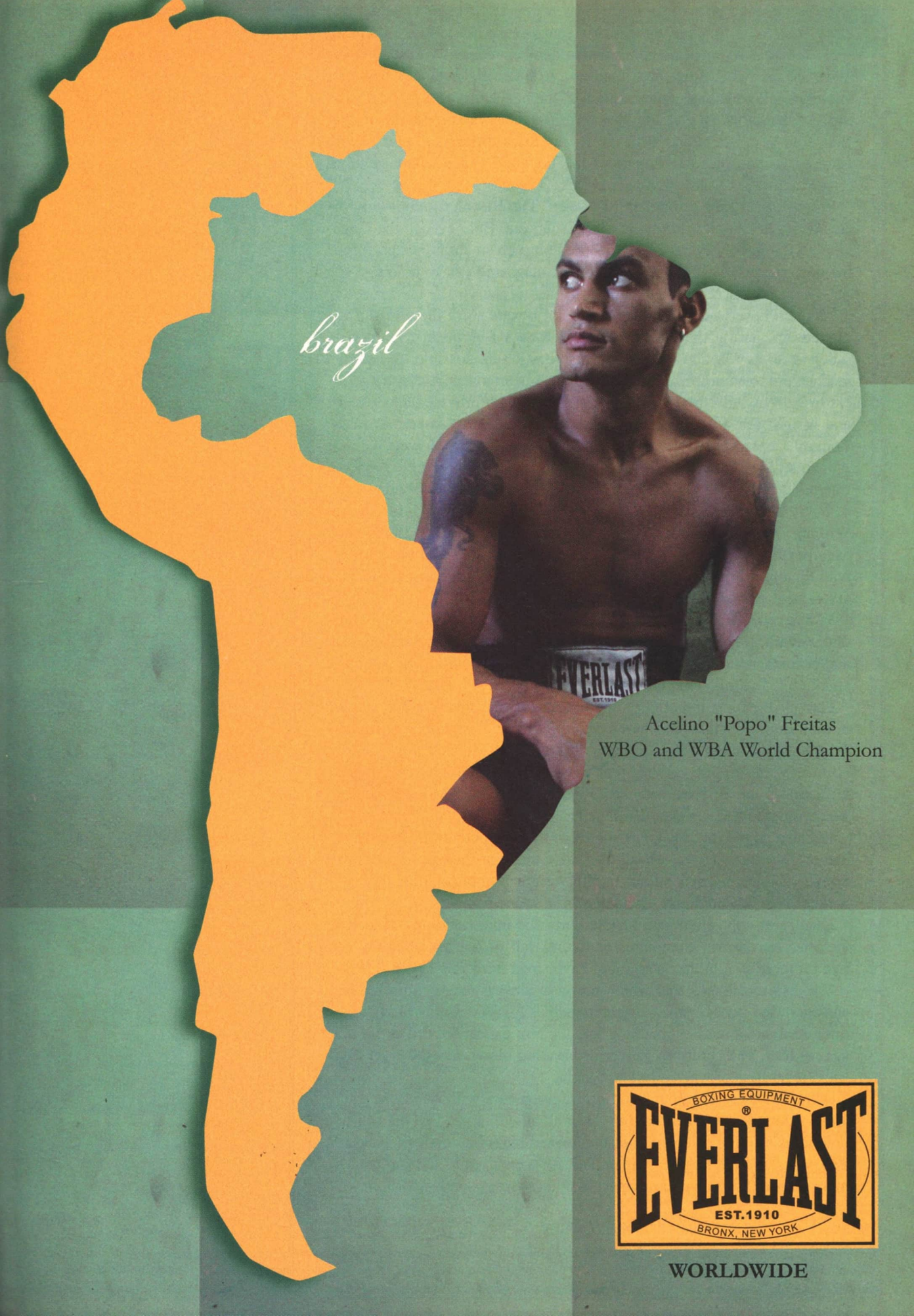

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There's no denying that there's something viscerally exhilarating about watching one boxer render another helpless with the power of his fists. More often than not, it is the big punchers that first attract people to boxing. Appreciation of the nuances comes later; it's the thrill of the knockout and admiration for the men who provide them that first grab your attention. With me it was Rocky Marciano and Archie Moore, the two biggest bangers of my boyhood years. Many younger fans would say the same thing about Mike Tyson.

From time to time throughout the years, THE RING has published articles listing the hardest hitters of a particular era. But never in the magazine's 81-year history have we embarked on such an ambitious project as the one contained within the pages of the magazine you're holding: The 100 Greatest Punchers Of All-Time.

As there have been tens of thousands of boxers since the dawn of the gloved era, paring the list down to 100 was a Herculean task, and in order to do as fair and as comprehensive a job as possible, the editors reached out to a number of boxing experts, historians, and industry insiders to help us with the project. Among those who provided suggestions and insight are, in no particular order, Don Elbaum, Robert Cassidy, Tommy Deas, Marty Mulcahey, Thomas Gerbasi, Jeff Jowett, Claude Abrams, Steve Kim, Joe Koizumi, and various members of the International Boxing Research Organization. Thank you, one and all.

While the editors made the final selections, it was Senior Writer William Dettloff who wrote all of the copy, except the Joe Louis book excerpt *(page 168)*. It was a massive undertaking, and Bill pulled it off with his usual brilliance, providing readers with an in-depth, fun-to-read assessment of each fighter.

Whenever THE RING compiles any kind of list there are inevitably misunderstanding stemming from the fact that some readers fail to read and/or understand the criteria set forth in the introduction. So pay close attention to the following guidelines.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that this is a ranking of *punchers*, not fighters. Therefore, you will find a number of fighters rated ahead of guys who beat them. Take Carlos Monzon, for example. Although the middleweight great outpointed Bennie Briscoe in their 1972 title fight, Briscoe is ranked slightly higher than Monzon because we considered Briscoe a harder puncher.

It's also important to keep in mind that this is a pound-for-pound evaluation. Obviously, from a head-to-head standpoint, heavyweight Earnie Shavers punched harder than featherweight Sandy Saddler, but it is Saddler who graded higher on a pound-for-pound basis.

Quality of opposition also factored into the final standings. Knockout victories over world champions or future Hall of Famers naturally carried far more weight than a string of kayos over third-rate foes.

We also took the era in which the individual fighters competed into consideration. Just because a fighter such as Stanley Ketchel fought at a time when combination punching was the rare exception, it was not held against him. The ability to deliver devastating blows was the chief yardstick, regardless of when a fighter fought.

Although there are bound to be disagreements with our final standings—after all, that's half the fun—I think all will agree that the finished product is a fitting celebration of the hardest hitters in boxing history. At 180 pages, it's the largest issue of THE RING ever published and features more than 400 classic photographs. In other words—a real *knockout!*

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 82, No. 10 **2003 Yearbook**

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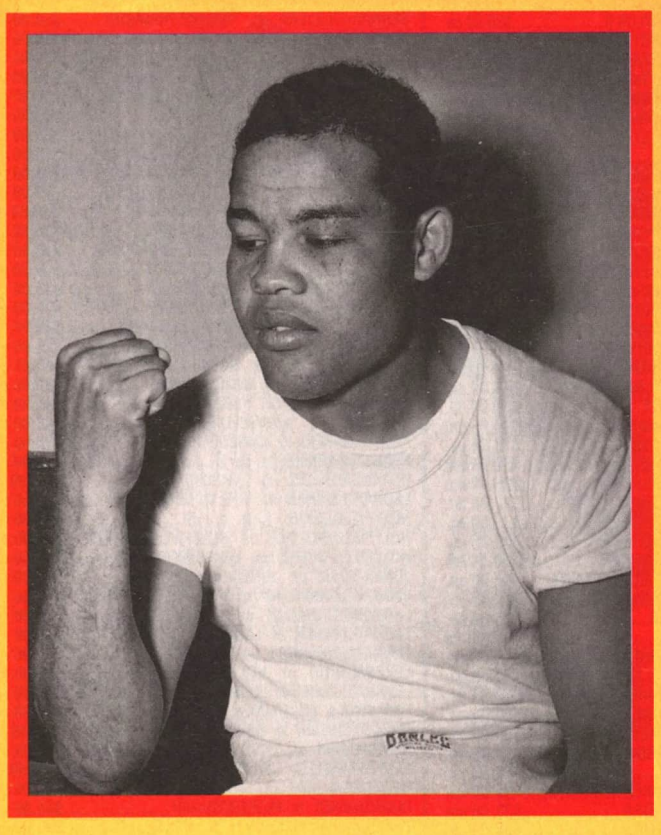
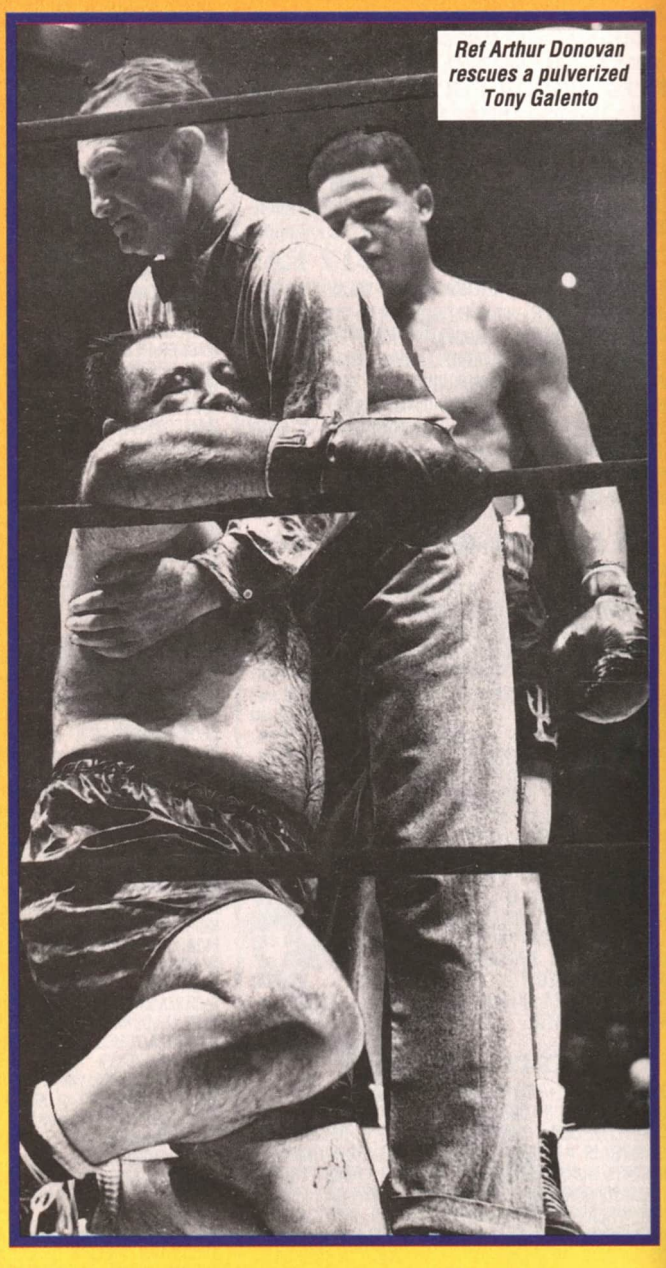
1 JOE LOUIS

Record: 68-3 (54)

Years Fought: 1934-'51

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1937-'50





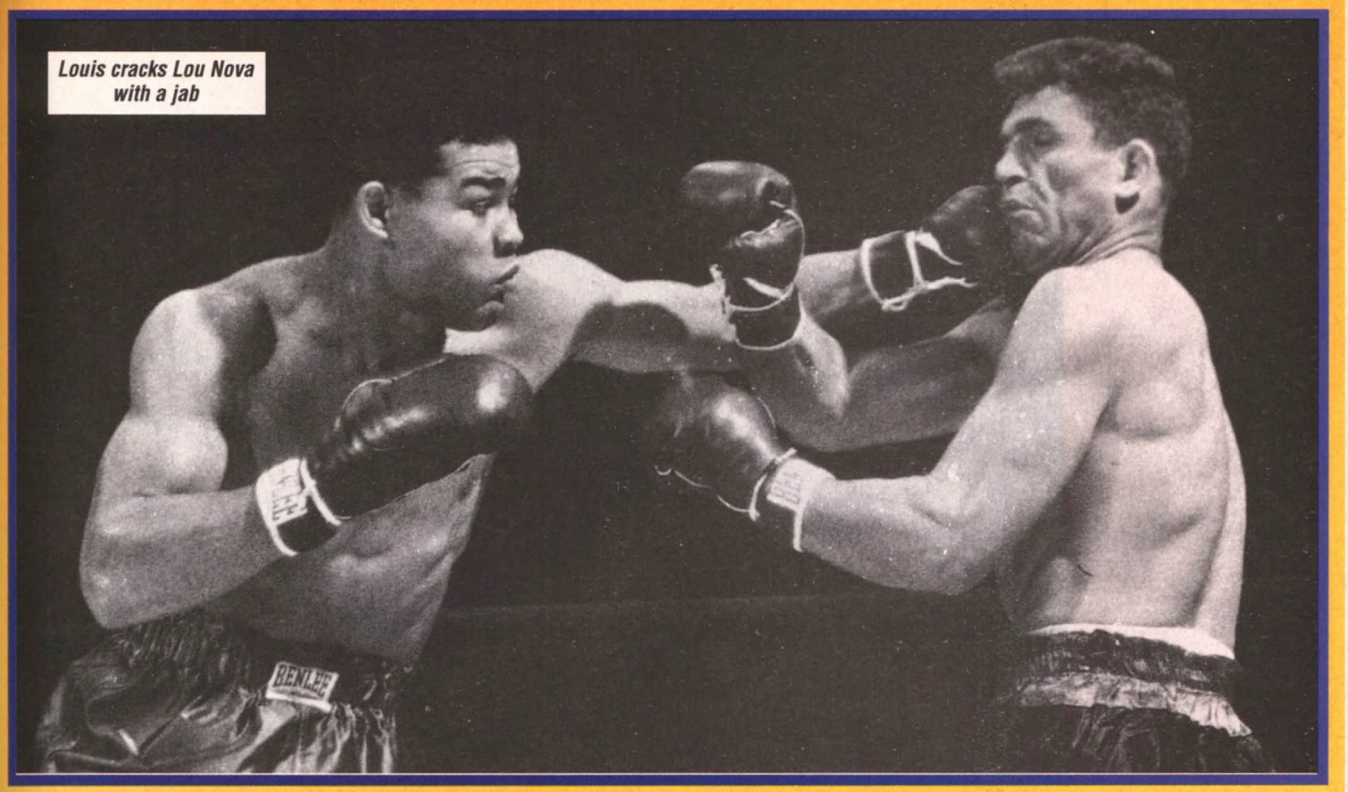
Ref Arthur Donovan rescues a pulverized Tony Galento

Best Punch: All the blows in Louis' arsenal were so perfectly and precisely thrown every time that you get the sense watching him that he couldn't have been wild or sloppy if he tried. But the right cross—short, straight, potent—was his bread and butter. When the uppercut or the hook knocked guys out, which happened a lot too, it almost was by accident.

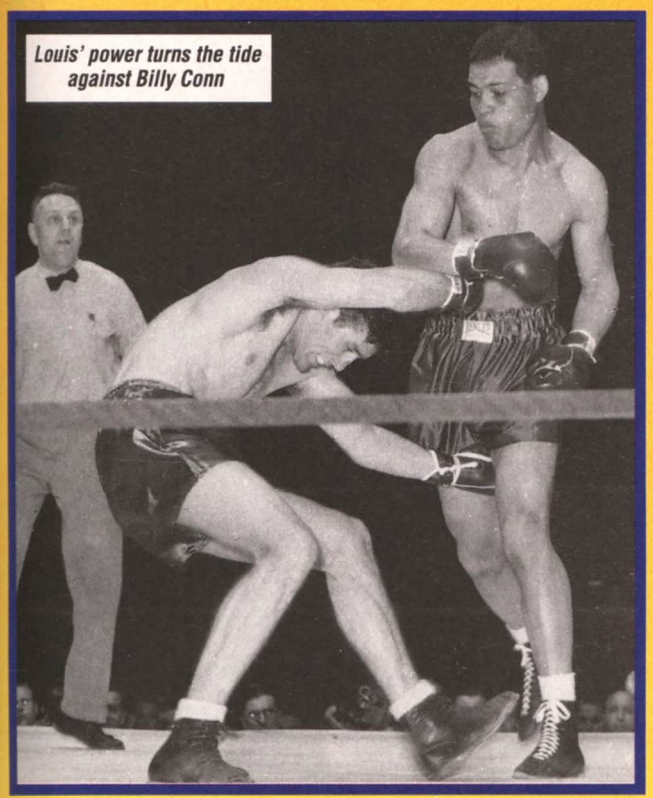
Greatest Knockout: Louis' entire career on film was a highlight reel of one spectacular knockout after another. Ultimately, the best must be what also was the most important: the historic 1938 first-round stoppage of a doomed Max Schmeling, who, in the midst of Louis' brutal first-round assault, at one point turned and screamed aloud as a right hand slammed into his kidney. It remains today a chilling example of what one man, properly gifted and groomed, can do to another absent all weapons save his fists.

Statistical Analysis: Want to know what kind of a puncher Louis was in his prime? Of the 13 fights he won by decision, five, or 38 percent, came in his last nine fights, when he was 36 and 37 years old. If he'd stayed retired after beating Jersey Joe Walcott in 1948, Louis would have scored knockouts in 51 of 61 fights, a kayo rate of 83.6 percent.

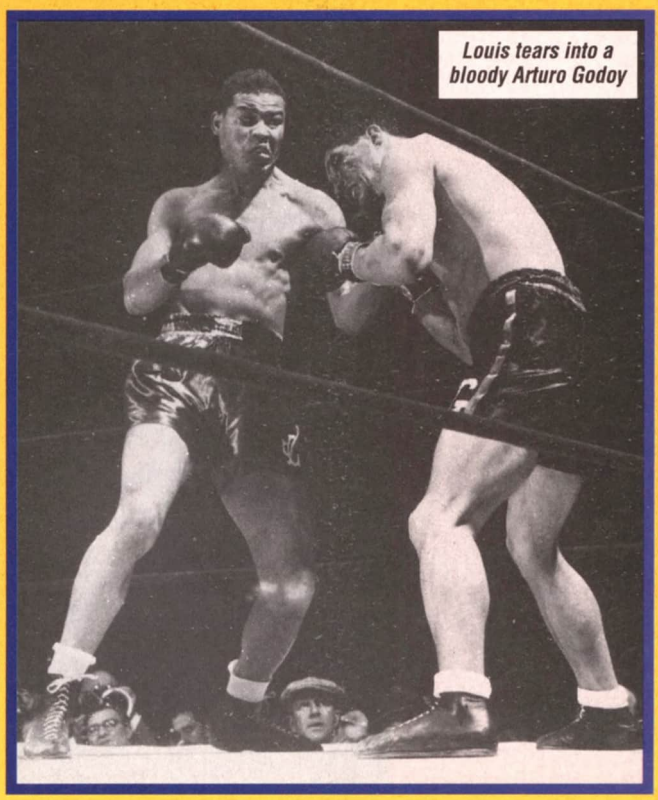
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Just about every guy who went the distance with the mature, prime Louis—Bob Pastor, Arturo Godoy, Walcott—Joe stopped in a subsequent rematch.



Louis cracks Lou Nova with a jab



Louis' power turns the tide against Billy Conn

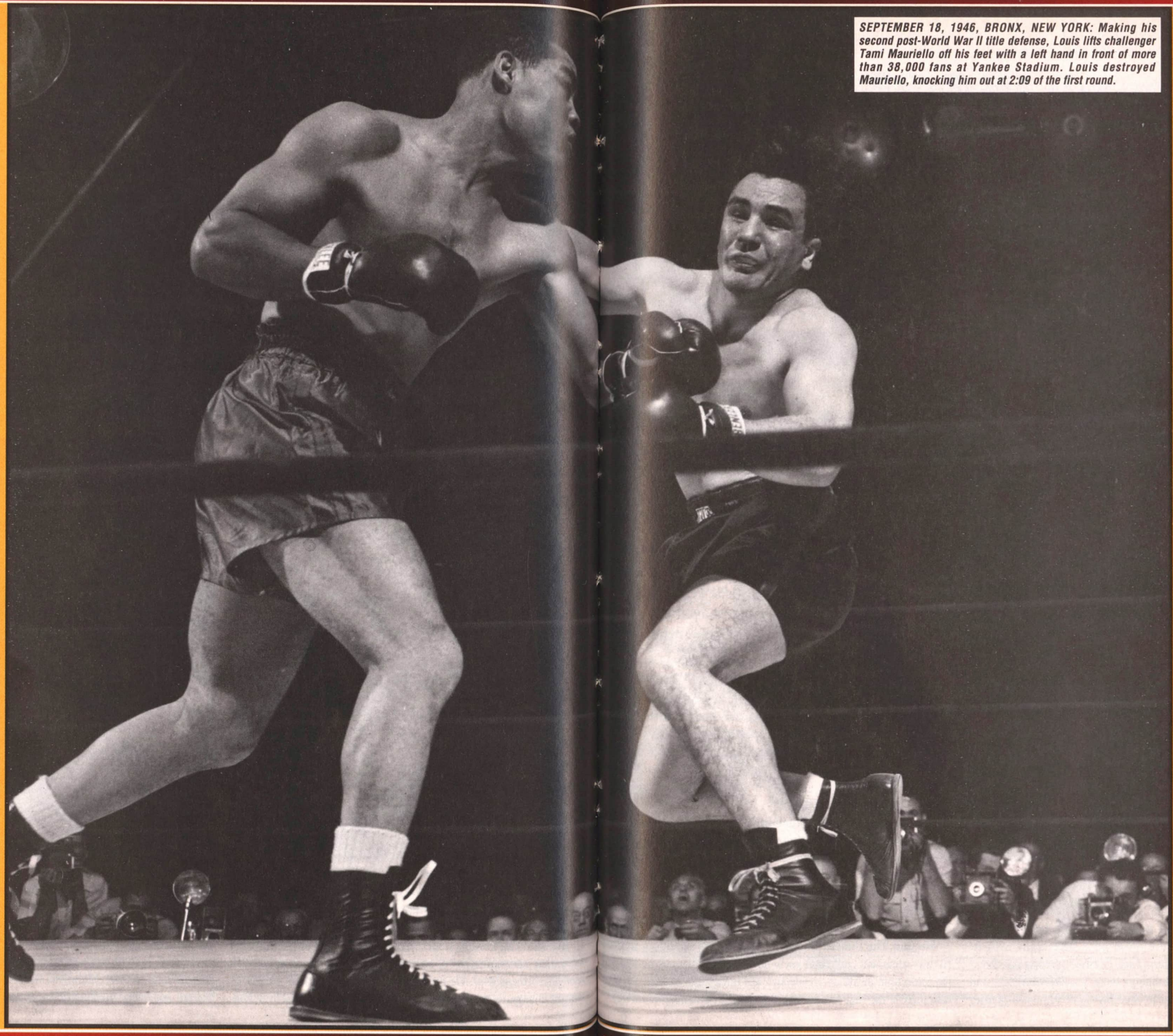


Louis tears into a bloody Arturo Godoy

The exception was stubborn Welshman Tommy Farr, who gave Louis fits in Louis' inaugural title defense in 1937 and, not coincidentally, never got another shot at him.

Beyond The Punch: Louis wasn't perfect; he was slow-footed and rather unimaginative. If he were fighting today, we might call him one-dimensional. He also had a fairly soft chin for a heavyweight champ, as myriad challengers floored or wobbled him. But his defense was good for a puncher and his hands quick enough to compensate for his feet.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Though not near the phenomenon he once was, the 37-year-old Louis still could punch a bit in 1951; in June he stopped tough contender Lee Savold. But four months later, Rocky Marciano walked through everything Louis had left and ended his long ride with an eighth-round knockout.



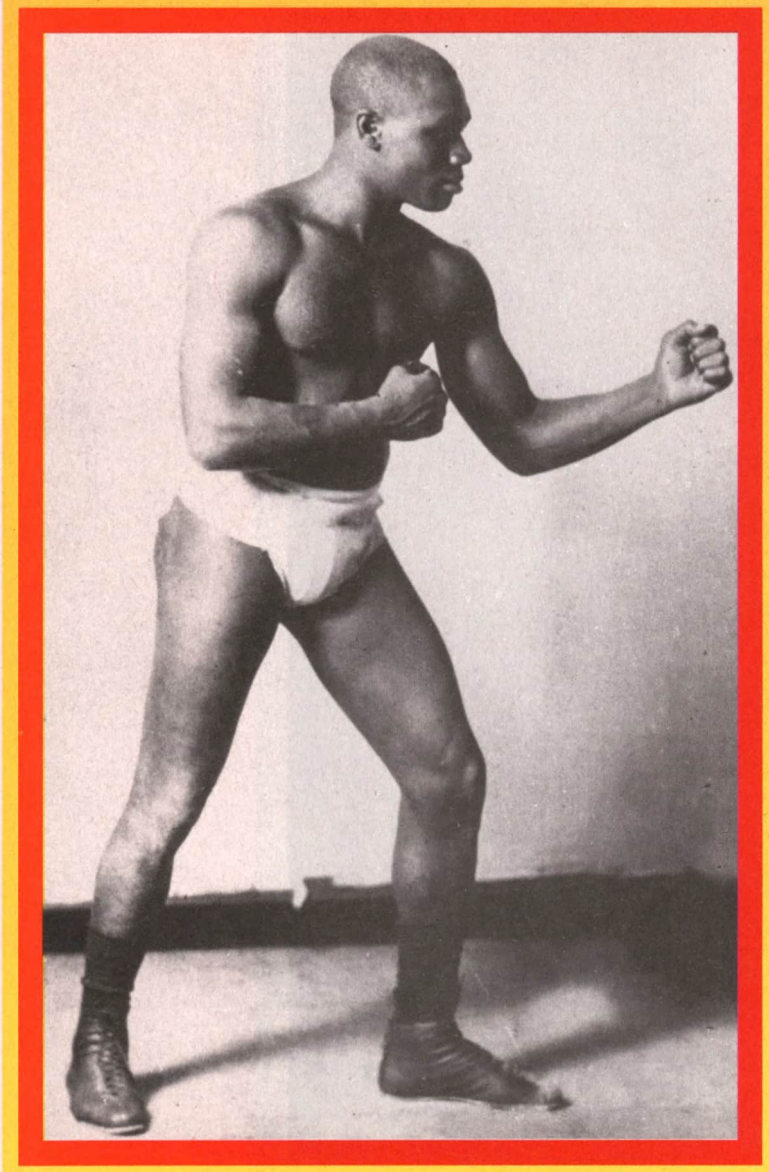
SEPTEMBER 18, 1946, BRONX, NEW YORK: Making his second post-World War II title defense, Louis lifts challenger Tami Mauriello off his feet with a left hand in front of more than 38,000 fans at Yankee Stadium. Louis destroyed Mauriello, knocking him out at 2:09 of the first round.

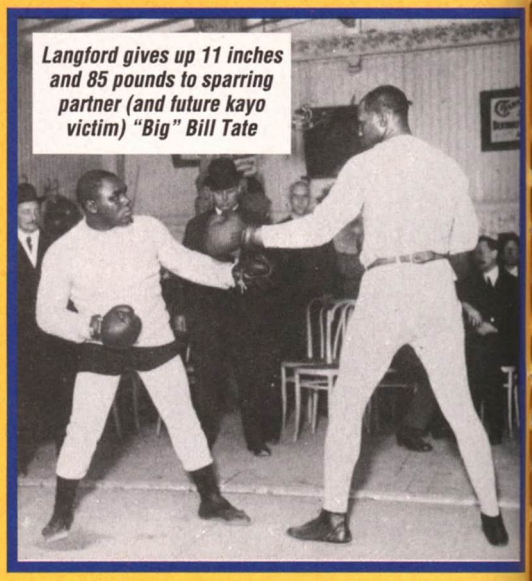
2 SAM LANGFORD

Record: 164-35-33 (115)
with 48 no-decisions and three no-contests

Years Fought: 1902-'26

Titles Held: none





Langford gives up 11 inches and 85 pounds to sparring partner (and future kayo victim) "Big" Bill Tate

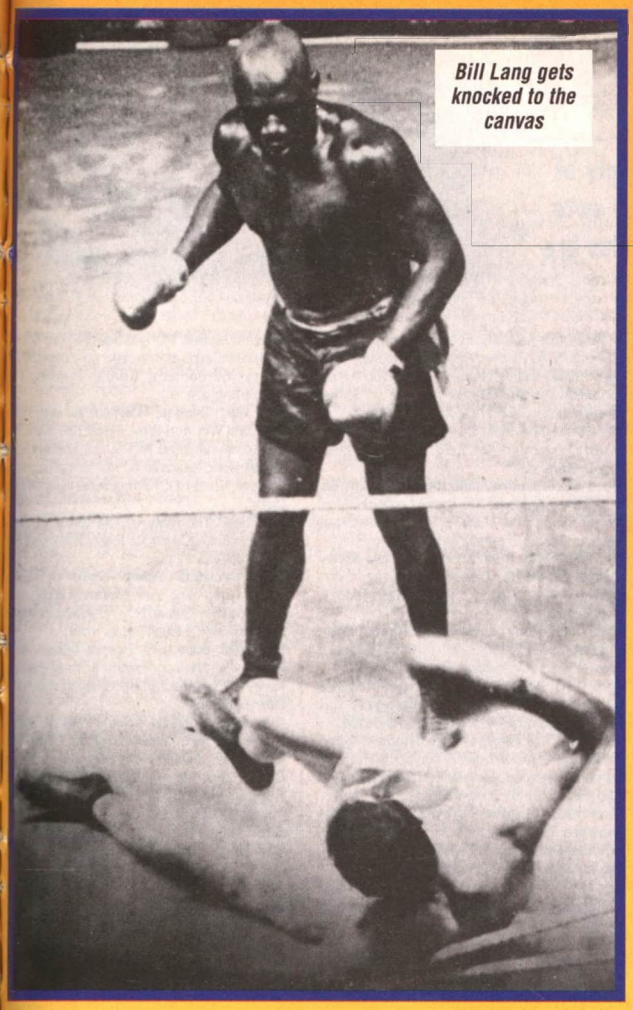
Best Punch: When he was barely a welterweight, Langford's right hand was knocking out heavyweights. The bigger he got, the more guys he caught with it: Fireman Jim Flynn, Philadelphia Jack O'Brien, George Godfrey, along with about every good fighter there was between 135 and 200 pounds who was willing to face him. For almost a quarter century, it was one of the best punches in the game.

Greatest Knockout: Middleweight great Tiger Flowers was four years away from whipping Harry Greb for the title when he and Langford met in Atlanta, Georgia—Flowers' backyard. Considered even then a defensive specialist, Flowers didn't get past the second round.

Statistical Analysis: Langford's kayo percentage is a relatively paltry 41 percent, but much of that is due to the circumstances of the day: He carried fighters, often fought at a huge weight disadvantage, and fought the same top-notch guys repeatedly. Just remember: He scored more knockouts than Joe Louis and Jack Dempsey combined.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Langford outweighed Jack Blackburn—who later would gain greater fame as Louis' trainer—but never could stop him. They fought six times between 1903 and '05, and the best Langford could manage was a 15-round decision win. They drew twice, Blackburn won one decision, and they fought to one no-decision and one no-contest.

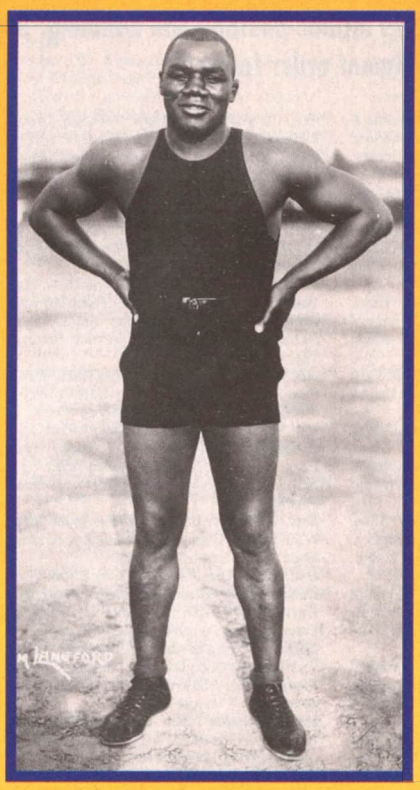
Beyond The Punch: Langford wasn't simply an all-out slugger. He was smart and crafty and knew how to out-think guys in the ring. He could fight inside or outside and was impossibly strong. He often held back in the ring so as to avoid scaring off potential future oppo-

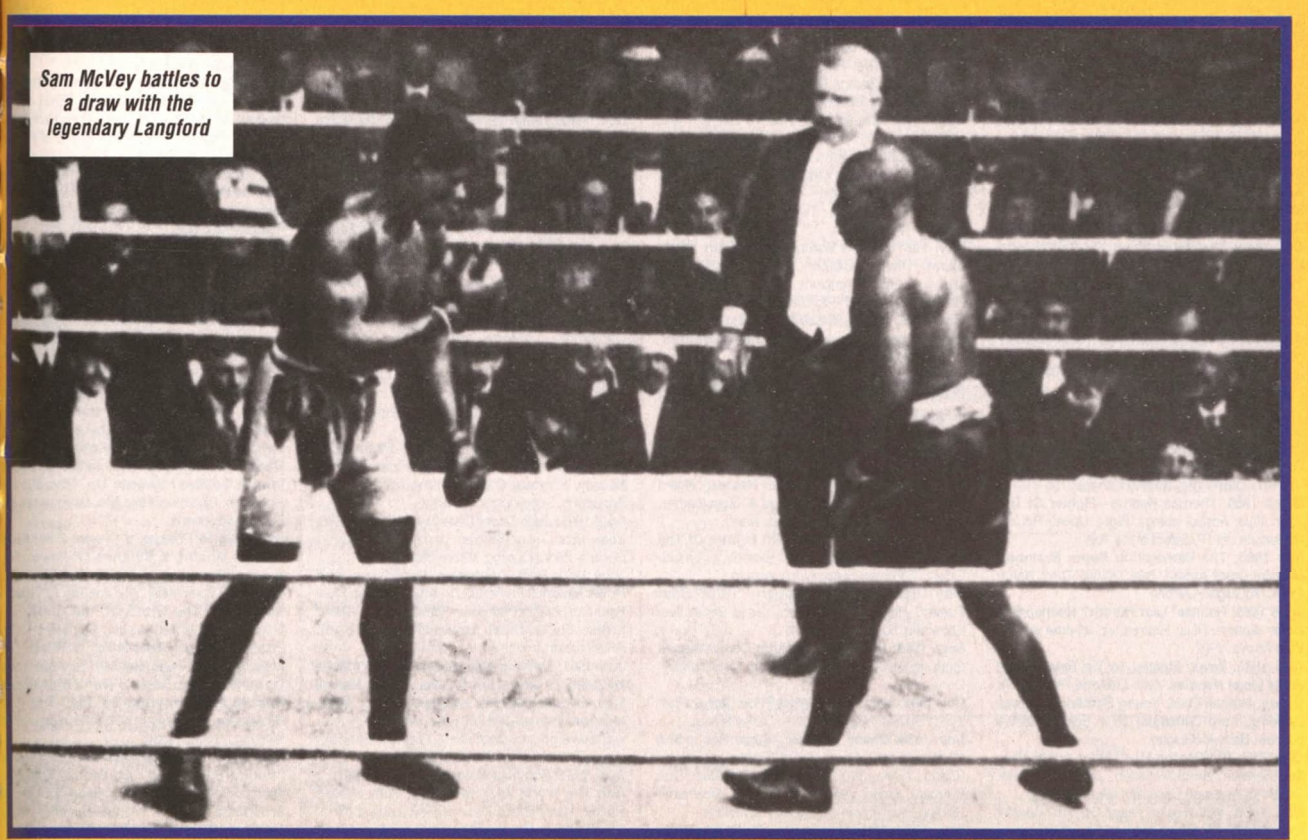


Bill Lang gets knocked to the canvas

nents. And he was impossible to intimidate. Langford was decades ahead of his time.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In April 1906, Langford took on the bigger, better, stronger Jack Johnson in Chelsea, Massachusetts. Johnson, who still was two years away from winning the heavyweight title, floored Langford twice on the way to winning a 15-round decision. Contrary to later reports that exaggerated Langford's success, Johnson controlled things throughout. Much has been implied retrospectively of Johnson's apparent refusal to grant Langford a rematch after winning the title, but as champion Johnson avoided all of the good, black fighters he'd met on the way up—Sam McVey, Joe Jeanette, Langford—and smartly opted instead for better-paying matches against white challengers.





Sam McVey battles to a draw with the legendary Langford

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Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander A Champ, But ... Plus: Dempsey-Firpo, Charles Murray, Khaosai Galaxy, Nunn-Curry, Henry Armstrong, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be ... But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again—How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

Jan. 1992: The State Of The Game. Plus: Jerry Quarry, Julio Cesar Chavez, Mysterious Billy Smith, Joey Gamache.

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Ted Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But What If He Had To Face These Guys? Plus: Bobby Czyz, Genaro Hernandez, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gibbons, Sugar Ray Leonard's career, Sugar Ray Robinson (color).

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April 1993: Riddick Bowe—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, All-Time Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

May 1993: Oscar De La Hoya's Sprint To The Title: Is He Good Enough *Now?* Plus: Carbajal-Gonzalez preview, Lennox Lewis, THE RING Poll, Freddie Pendleton.

April 1994: Michael Carbajal—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Brown-Norris, Kevin Kelley, Ceferino Garcia, Oscar De La Hoya, Tunney Hunsaker, Spinks-Foster.

Aug. 1994: Bowe's Back! Determined To Do It Again. Plus: Eric Griffin, Pernell Whitaker, Ray Mercer, Roger Donoghue, State of the Game (midterm report), All-Time Top 10: The Philippines.

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May 1997: De La Hoya-Whitaker: Can "Sweet Pea" Stop Oscar's March To Greatness? Plus: Fitzsimmons-Corbett, Junior Jones, Phillip Holiday, Don King, Zaragoza-McCullough.

June 1997 (Special Collector's Issue): Holyfield-Tyson II: What It Means For Now ... And Forever. Plus: Holyfield-Tyson fight poster, Naseem Hamed, computer unification, Sayers-Heenan, state of the game.

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May 2001 (108-Page Extra): Felix Trinidad—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, Barrera-Hamed preview, Bernard Hopkins, Joey Archer.

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3 JIMMY WILDE

Record: 131-3-2 (99)
with 13 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1910-'23

Title Held: World Flyweight 1916-'23

Wilde skips rope as trainer Benny Williams looks on

Best Punch: When he was a spindly teenager flattening grown men twice his size in carnivals in Wales, it was Wilde's potent right hand that drew the most gasps. He set it up expertly, drawing opponents into range, closer, closer, until he could drive it home, and when he did you saw why, at Wilde's funeral in 1969, Gene Tunney called him the greatest fighter he ever saw.

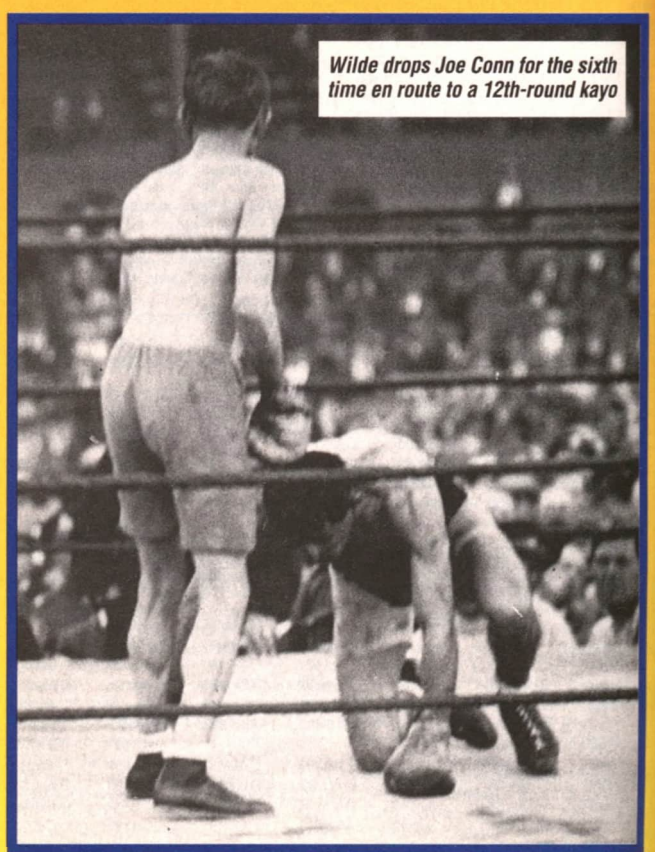
Greatest Knockout: Scotland's Tancy Lee ended Wilde's undefeated streak by 17-round kayo in England in 1915, and Wilde was desperate to get him back in the ring. He finally did in June '16, and exacted his revenge. He battered Lee around the ring and stopped him in the 11th round to reclaim the European flyweight title.

Statistical Analysis: Few fighters of any weight put up better numbers than Wilde did. Consider: His kayo rate was 66 percent. In 1915-'16, he knocked out 16 opponents in a row; when that streak ended, he stopped his next 12 straight. Over a 13-year career, he never went more than three fights without scoring a knockout—and that only happened twice. And right out of the box, he went 101 fights without losing, winning 64 by knockout.

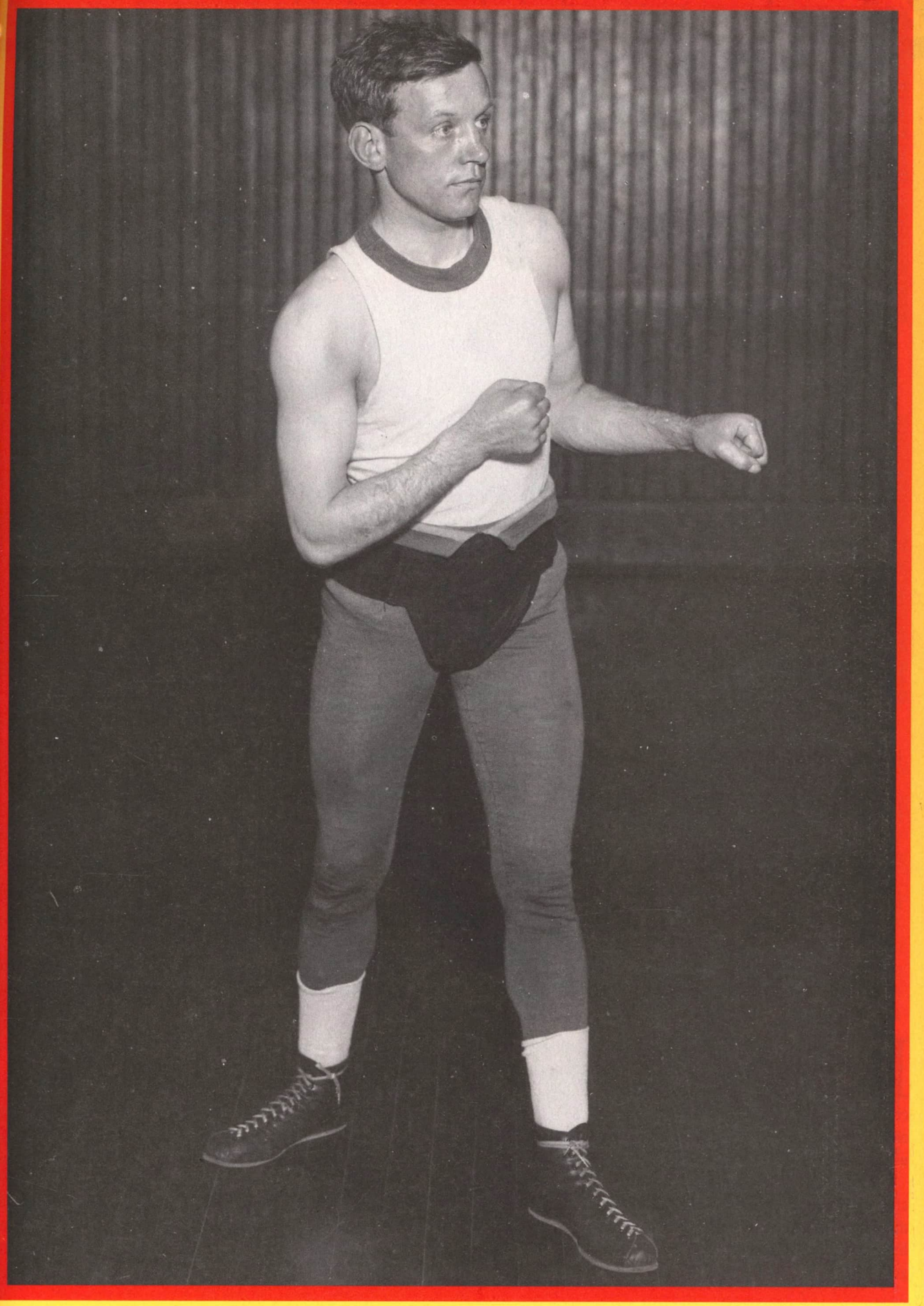
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Wilde faced off with tough Young Jennings twice and couldn't stop him. They fought in 1911 and again in '12, with Wilde winning both by decision.

Beyond The Punch: For a while doctors studied Wilde in laboratories toward locating the source of his unspeakable punching power. They found nothing noteworthy, and it wasn't brute strength either that made Wilde special; it was his uncanny timing and anticipation that created openings that he would exploit with unerring courage and accuracy, even against men who outweighed him by 20 pounds.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Wilde was at the end of the road when he defended the flyweight title against Pancho Villa in New York in June 1923. Some 40,000 fans watched him hit the deck after the bell in the second round and then absorb a brutal beating until it was stopped in the seventh. He retired, at age 31, and never fought again.



Wilde drops Joe Conn for the sixth time en route to a 12th-round kayo



4 ARCHIE MOORE

Record: 194-26-8 (141)

Years Fought: 1936-'63

Titles Held: World Light Heavyweight 1952-'62

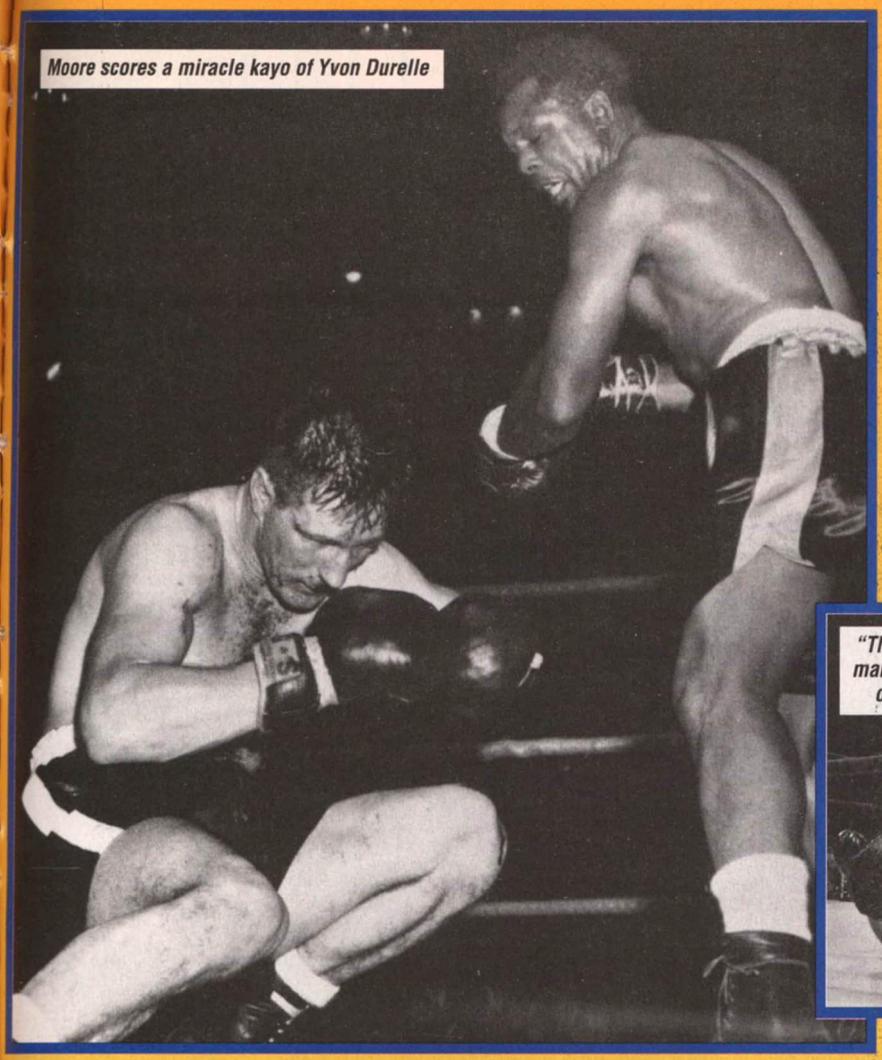
Moore rocks Bob Baker with a right hand

Best Punch: Moore probably stopped as many guys with his left hook as he did with his straight right, but when he was hurt or desperate or winded or behind on points, the right cross—thrown straight as a pin and right down the pipe—was the one he went with. It didn't always do the trick by itself, but was usually the punctuation mark at the end of the beating.

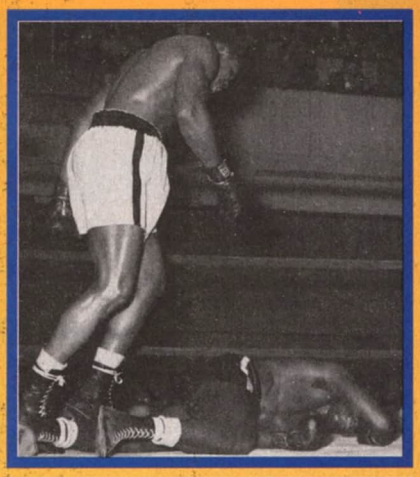
Greatest Knockout: Moore was almost 42 years old when crude, strapping Canadian Yvon Durelle banged him to the floor three times in the first round and once more in the fifth in their light heavyweight title fight in December 1958. But Moore kept getting up and chopping away, and by the middle rounds Durelle was taking a beating. Moore dropped him in the seventh and 10th rounds and for the full count in the 11th.

Statistical Analysis: For a guy who was the most prolific kayo puncher in history, Moore didn't put together a lot of huge knockout streaks. His longest kayo streak was 10 straight, compiled in his second year as a pro. He also once stopped eight straight, and had two separate streaks of seven straight knockouts.

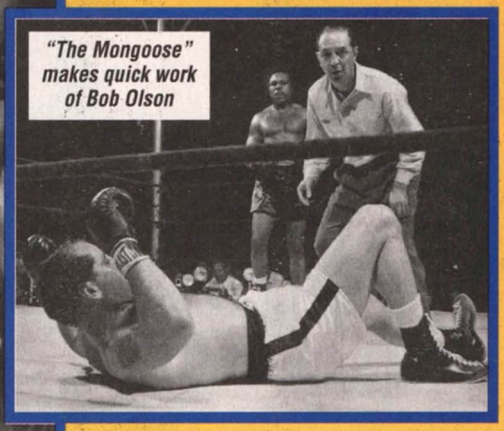
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Joey Maxim was stopped just once in 115 fights and it wasn't by Moore, even though they fought a total of 45 rounds. Moore decisioned Maxim for the title in December 1952 and successfully defended against him twice,



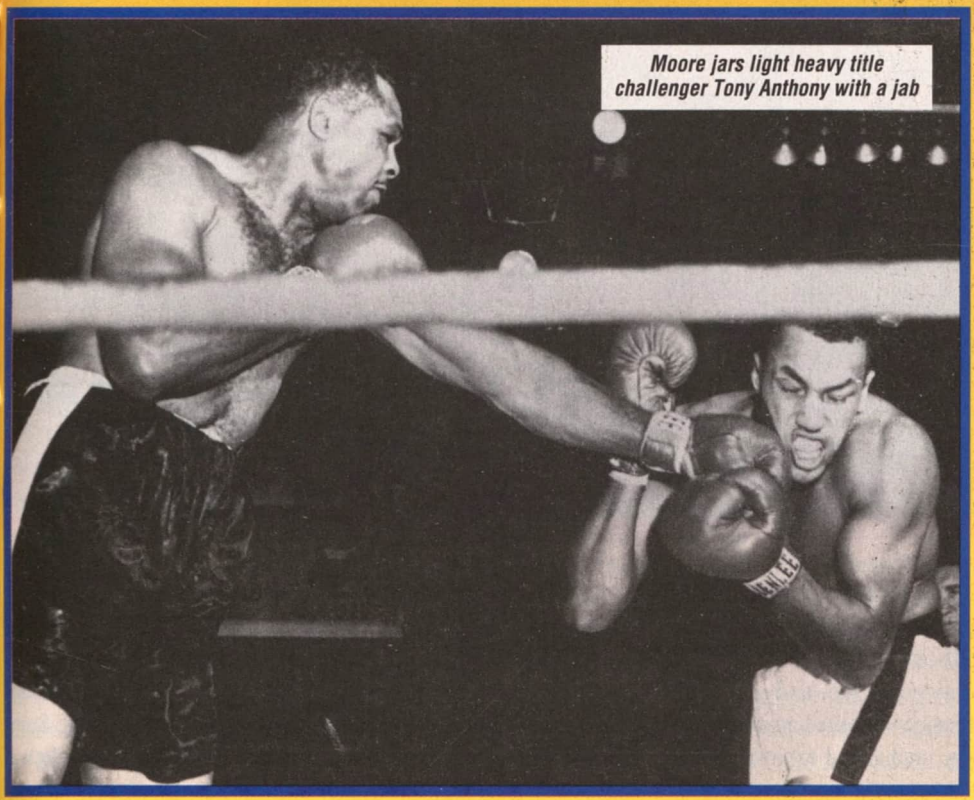
Moore scores a miracle kayo of Yvon Durelle



Moore blasts out Jimmy Bivins



"The Mongoose" makes quick work of Bob Olson



Moore jars light heavy title challenger Tony Anthony with a jab

and all three went the full 15 rounds.

Beyond The Punch: Moore scored more knockouts—141—than any fighter in history, but he was no straight-ahead slugger. He was exceptionally crafty and patient in the ring and was perfectly willing to take his time and stick and stick a guy until he finally was ready to go. Then he would bring out the big guns. He was at once a meticulous genius and an explosive puncher—the rarest combination.

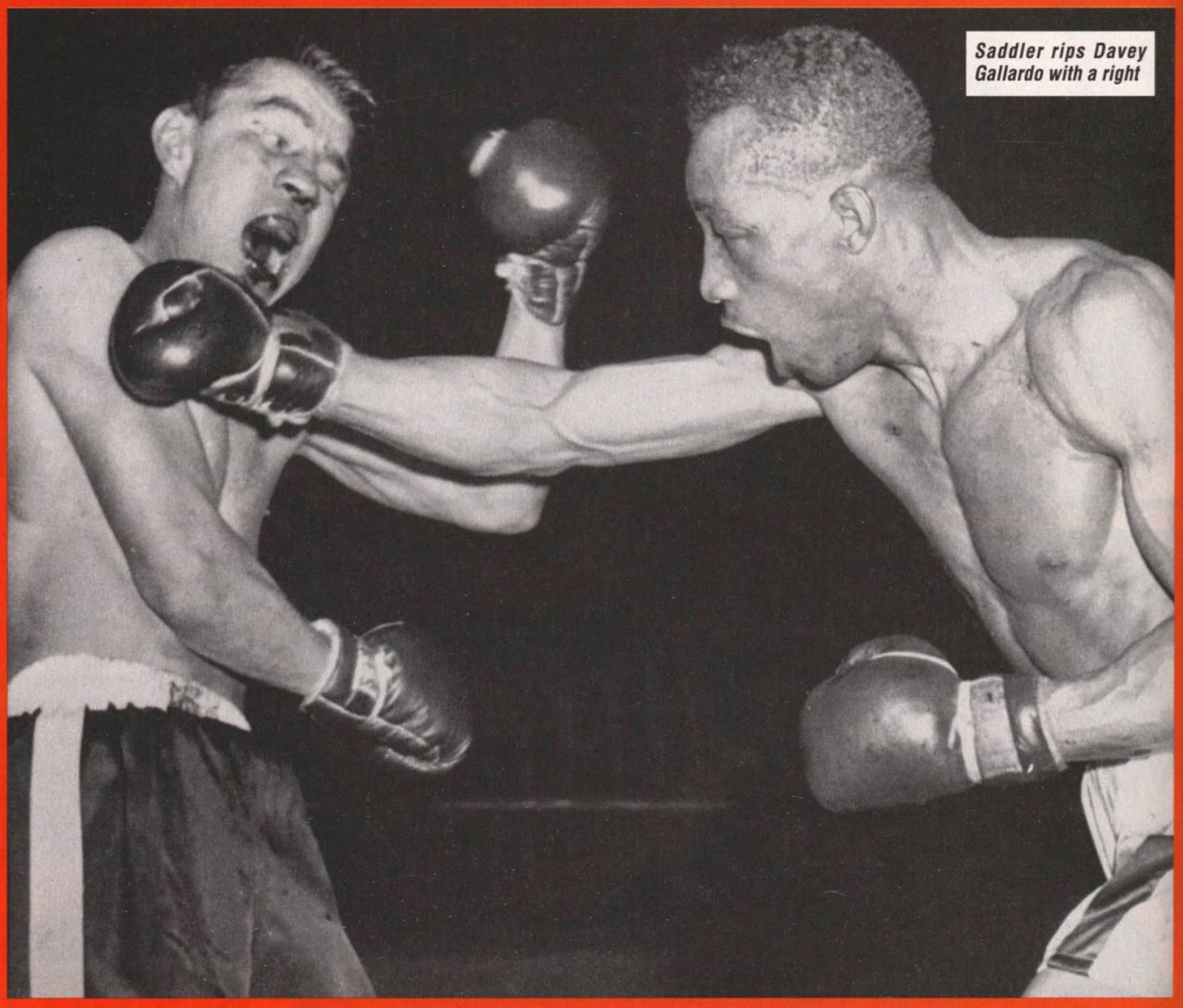
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: As great as Moore was, he couldn't do a thing with the slightly greater Ezzard Charles, who whipped Moore three times, once by knockout. And it wasn't just because Charles was bigger; their weights were close for each fight. Charles was just better.

5 SANDY SADDLER

Record: 144-16-2 (103)

Years Fought: 1944-'56

Titles Held: World Featherweight 1948-'49, '50-'56; World Junior Lightweight 1949-'51

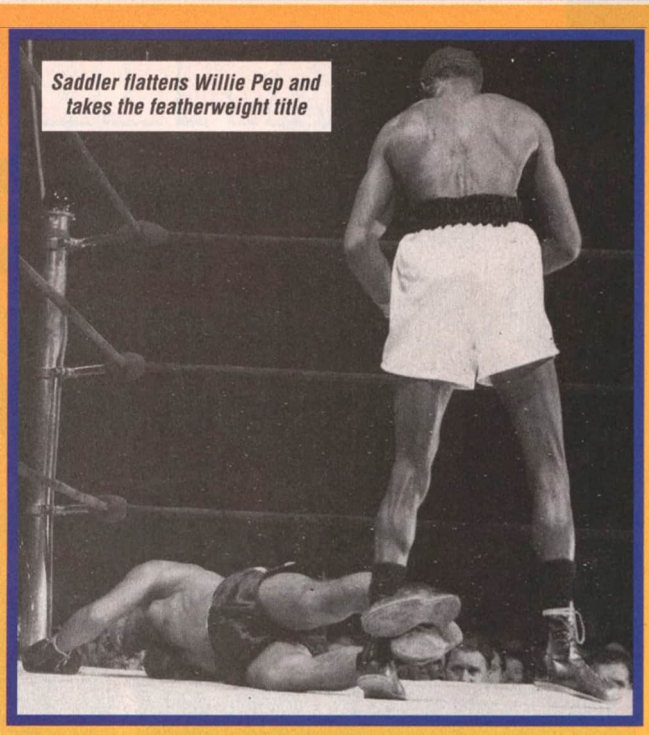


Saddler rips Davey Gallardo with a right

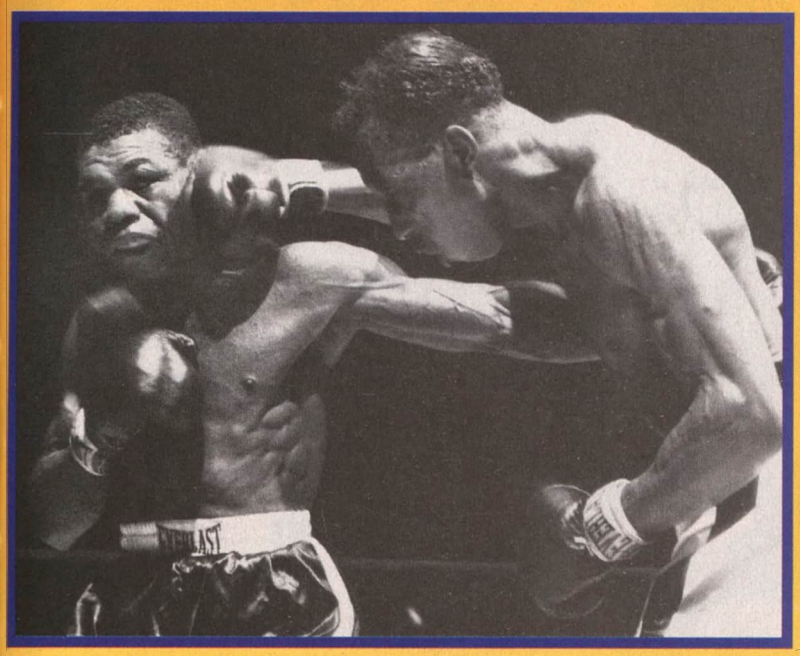
Best Punch: Saddler's overhand right landed like a firecracker on the faces of a heck of a lot of very good featherweights throughout the 1940s and '50s, and when it did, most went down. His left hook was good, too, and you could make a case for that being his best punch—it felled an impressive number of guys. But the right—long, arcing, and explosive—was the money punch, and he wouldn't have been a legend without it.

Greatest Knockout: Willie Pep had won 135 of 137 fights when he and Saddler met for the featherweight title in New York in October 1948. Pep hadn't lost in five years. Yet Saddler destroyed him, rocking him in the first, twice flooring him, and stopping him in the fourth with a sweeping left hook. Some thought at the time that it was fixed, but all you had to do was watch their subsequent meetings to know that it was not.

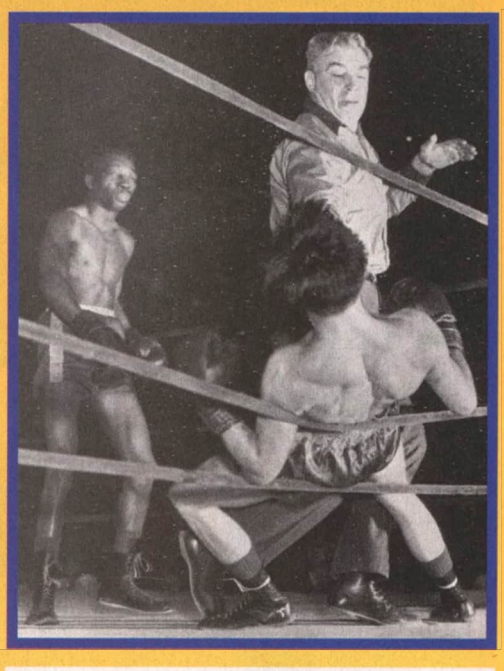
Bill Bossio gets stung by a left



Saddler flattens Willie Pep and takes the featherweight title



Teddy "Red Top" Davis fields a nasty right hand



Saddler forces a fifth-round TKO against Tommy Collins

Statistical Analysis: Saddler's 63 percent kayo rate, while very high for a guy with 162 fights, is fairly misleading. It is more telling that his 103 knockouts places him sixth on the all-time list, right behind Ray Robinson and right in front of legendary punchers Sam Langford, Henry Armstrong, and Jimmy Wilde.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Tough Cuban Orlando Zulueta wasn't stopped in 124 fights, and that includes two tussles with Saddler: in 1947 in Havana, and for the vacant junior lightweight title in Ohio on '49. Saddler won both by decision.

Beyond The Punch: Saddler was among the most skilled ever at fighting dirty. He wasn't embarrassed to use his head, his shoulders, his elbows, or the heel of his gloves or his thumbs to get an edge. He was a hard man and a hard fighter who was stopped just once in 162 fights—that in his second fight as a pro.

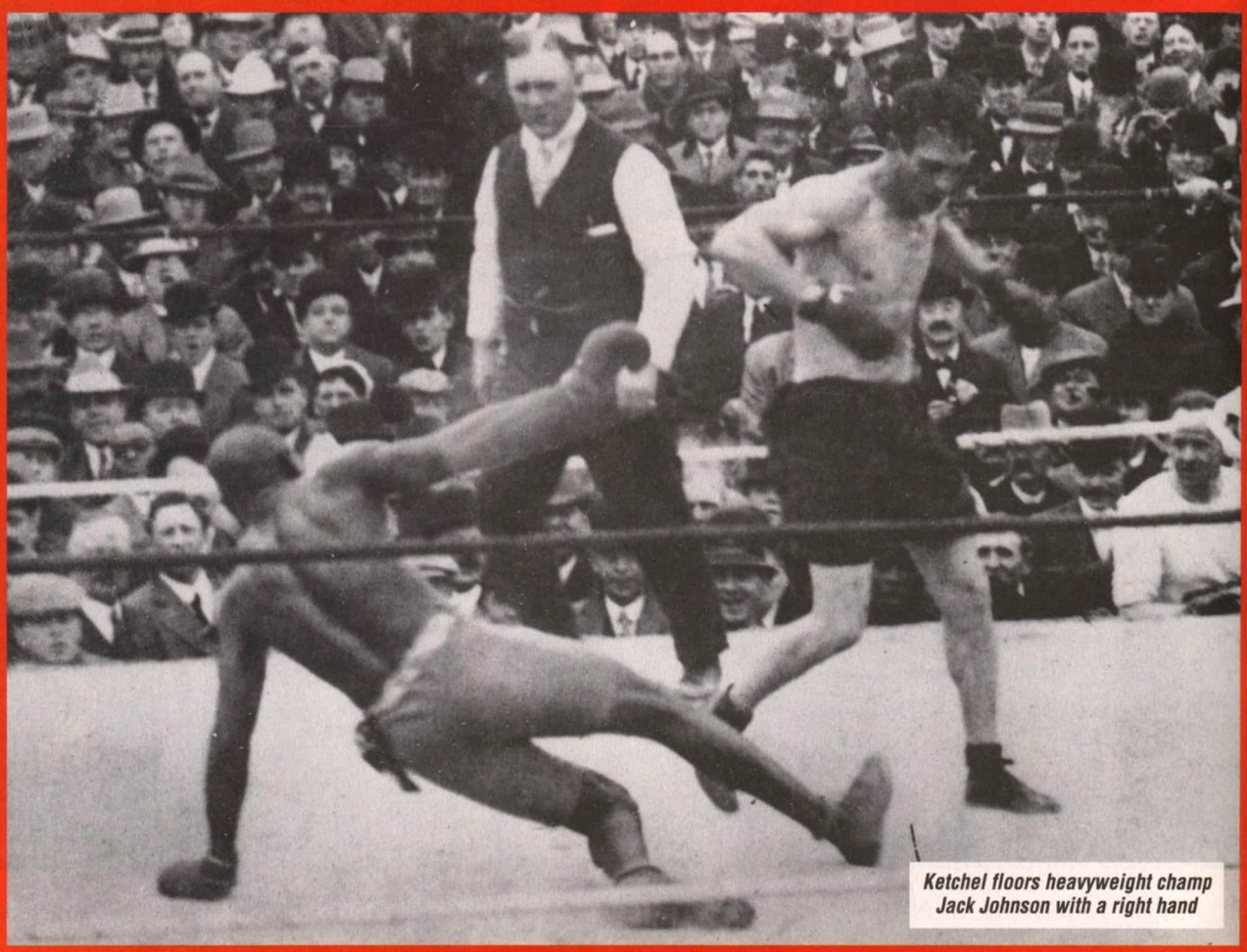
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Pep dazzled Saddler in their rematch, which sold out Madison Square Garden in January 1949. Using every trick he'd learned in almost 140 pro fights, Pep outboxed and outslicked Saddler just enough up through the middle rounds to survive Saddler's later-round assault and reclaim the title by decision. You wouldn't have known it looking at him, though. Pep bled from several cuts and was bruised and lumped up all over.

6 STANLEY KETCHEL

Record: 52-4-4 (49)
with 4 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1904-'10

Titles Held: World Middleweight 1908, 1908-'10

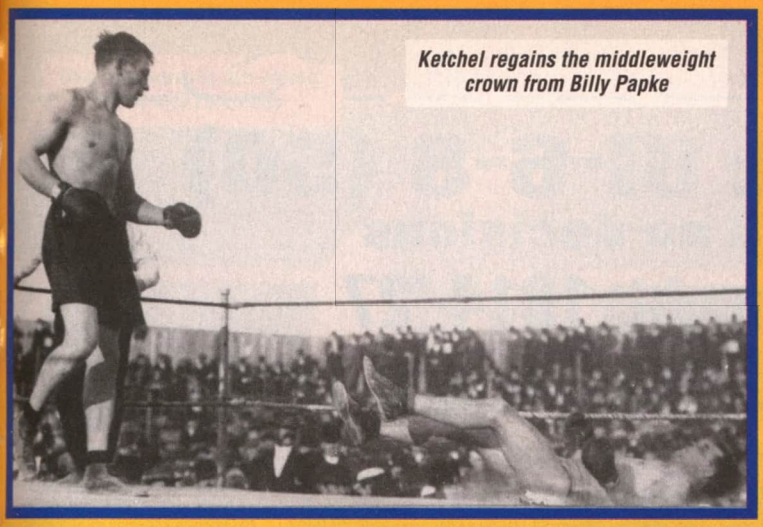


Ketchel floors heavyweight champ Jack Johnson with a right hand

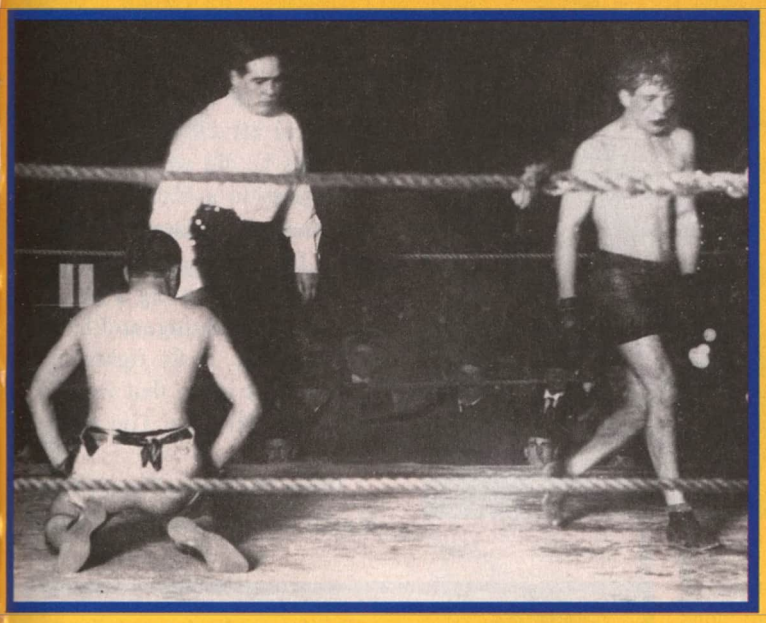
Best Punch: Everyone knows it was Ketchel's overhand right that briefly floored Jack Johnson during their infamous exhibition staged allegedly for the heavyweight title in 1909. But the overhand right also was primarily responsible for Ketchel's knockouts of Billy Papke, Jack Sullivan, and Philadelphia Jack O'Brien, to name a few. It was a sledgehammer.

Greatest Knockout: In September 1908, Ketchel lost the middleweight title to Papke after Papke hit him in the throat in the opening round, and it was all Ketchel could do to hang on until getting stopped in the 12th. When they rematched two months later, Ketchel ravaged Papke, beating him senseless on the way to an 11-round kayo win.

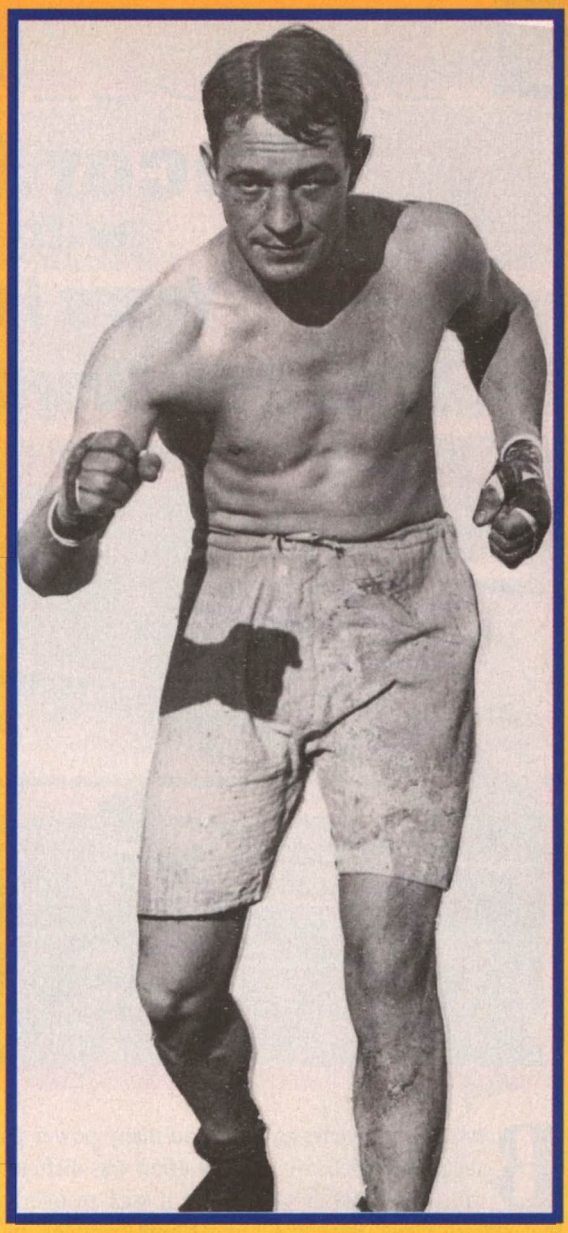
Statistical Analysis: Ketchel's ratio of knockouts to decision wins is the highest of any middleweight champion in history. That includes such celebrated punchers as Rocky Graziano, Tony Zale, Thomas Hearns, Sugar Ray Robinson, Carlos Monzon, Felix Trinidad, and Marvelous Marvin Hagler. Ketchel also put together one of the more impressive kayo streaks of the era: In 1905 he scored 14 straight knockouts and stopped 17 of 18 opponents overall. Heady stuff at a time when more fights than not were ruled no-decisions.



Ketchel regains the middleweight crown from Billy Papke



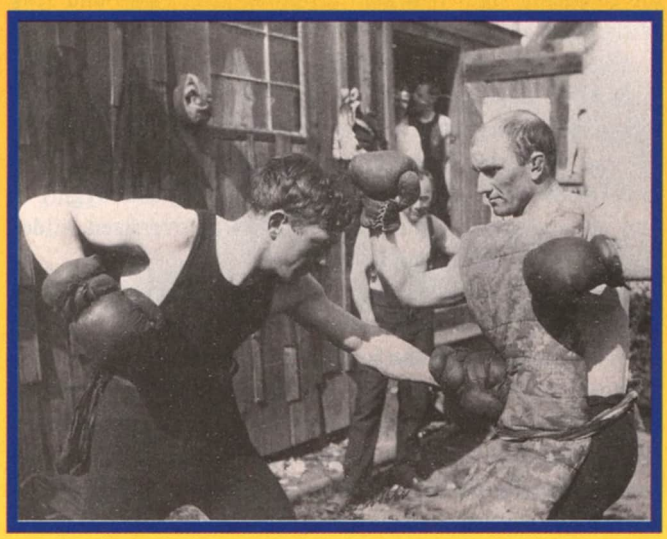
Joe Thomas is floored in round 30 en route to a 32-round Ketchel kayo



The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: If every fighter has an arch nemesis, Maurice Thompson was Ketchel's. They fought three times in 1904, each time in Butte, Montana. Thompson outpointed Ketchel twice and drew with him once, and when you consider that Ketchel lost just four times in his career, that's significant.

Beyond The Punch: Ketchel was no fancy boxer; he was clumsy and a swarmer. His defense was his overhand right. Aside from his punch and fierce temperament, he had excellent staying power. His record shows knockout wins in the 24th, 17th, 32nd, and 20th rounds. He was almost vulgar to watch he was so crude in the ring, but he could hit like a sledgehammer for as long as it took.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Legend has it that Ketchel and heavyweight king Jack Johnson had struck a deal before their bout in 1909 to go easy and that Ketchel broke it when he winged a right hand that floored Johnson in the 12th. That Johnson knocked Ketchel cold immediately upon rising tells you all you need to know.



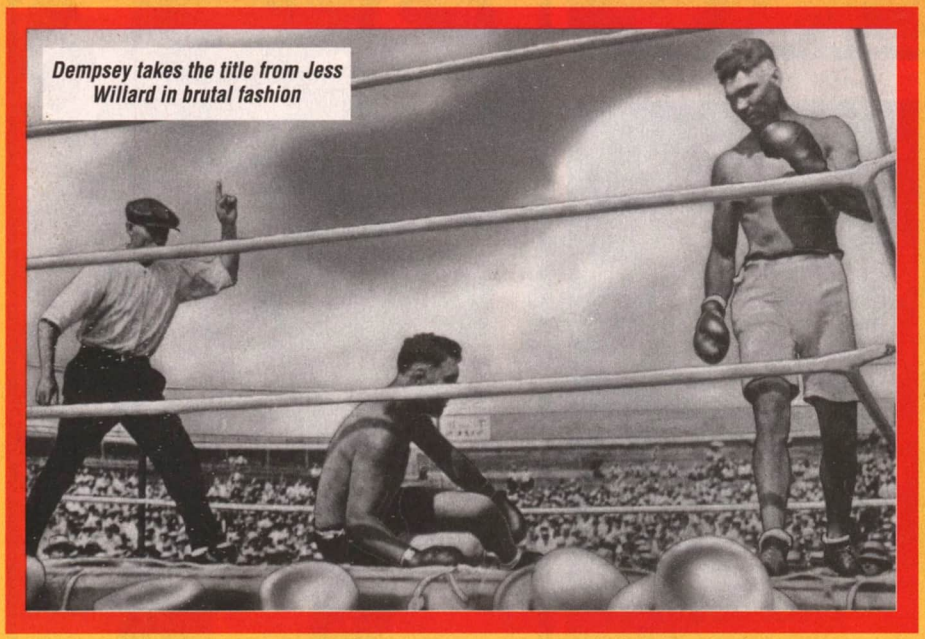
Ketchel's sparring partners knew enough to wear heavy padding

7 JACK DEMPSEY

Record: 61-6-8 (50)
with 6 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1914-'27

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1919-'26



Dempsey takes the title from Jess Willard in brutal fashion

Best Punch: Dempsey threw so many power punches in such rapid succession that it often was difficult to identify the knockout blows. But it was an overhand right that started Gene Tunney's Long Count troubles, and it was the overhand right that kept dropping Luis Firpo and Jess Willard and also that toppled Georges Carpentier.

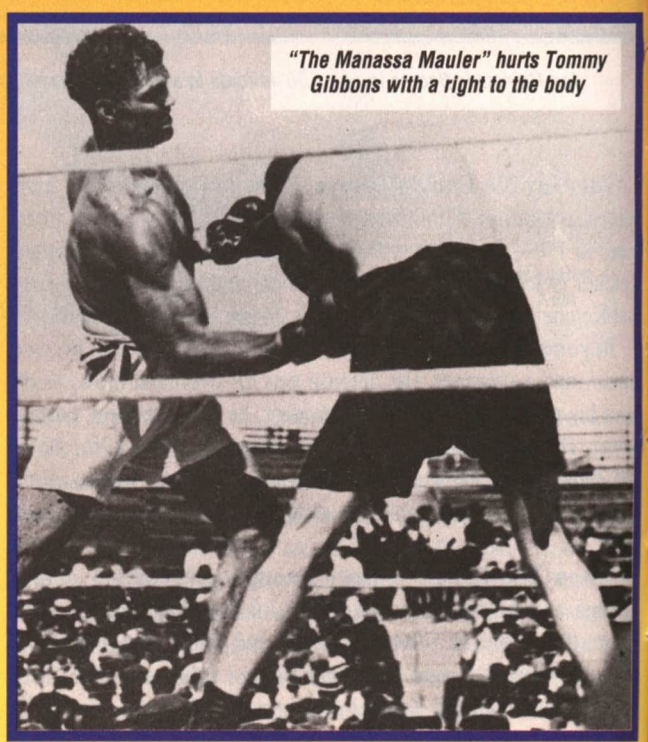
Greatest Knockout: Dempsey's massacre of the lumbering Willard for the heavyweight title in 1919 remains today one of the worst beatings suffered by a heavyweight champion in defense of the title. The miracle of it was that Willard made it to the third round, what with Dempsey snarling and tugging at him like a starved hyena bringing down an oversized wildebeest. It was mesmerizing in its brutality.

Statistical Analysis: Who says a young prospect needs rounds on his way to a title shot? In the 31 outings prior to his destruction of Willard (fought in just under two years), Dempsey scored 18 first-round knockouts. In 1918, he stopped five straight in the first round, and his five fights prior to the Willard win also were first-round stoppage wins.

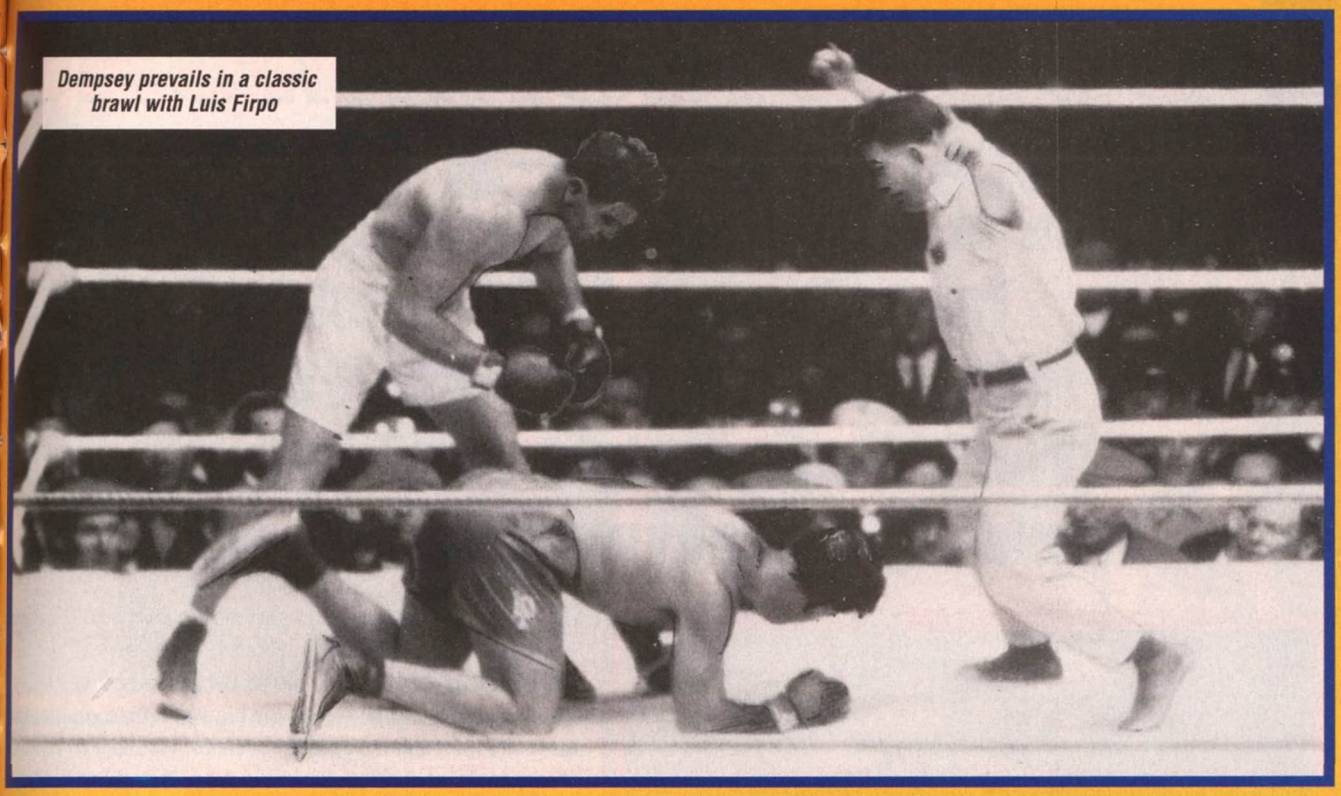
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Tiger that he was, Dempsey couldn't do a thing with pudgy, quick-footed Willie Meehan, who met Dempsey five times between 1917 and '18. Dempsey could manage just one win (by four-round decision), dropping two decisions and settling for a pair of draws.

Beyond The Punch: For good reason, we remember Dempsey as a wild, two-fisted brawler. But when so inclined he could tone down his maniacal attack and wear a guy down, as he did with Bill Brennan on his way to a 12th-round knockout. At his best, Dempsey was fast on his feet for a puncher and wasn't bashful about chasing a guy down who needed chasing, and he had a chin of steel: In 81 fights he was stopped just once, that in the first round by Fireman Jim Flynn in 1917.

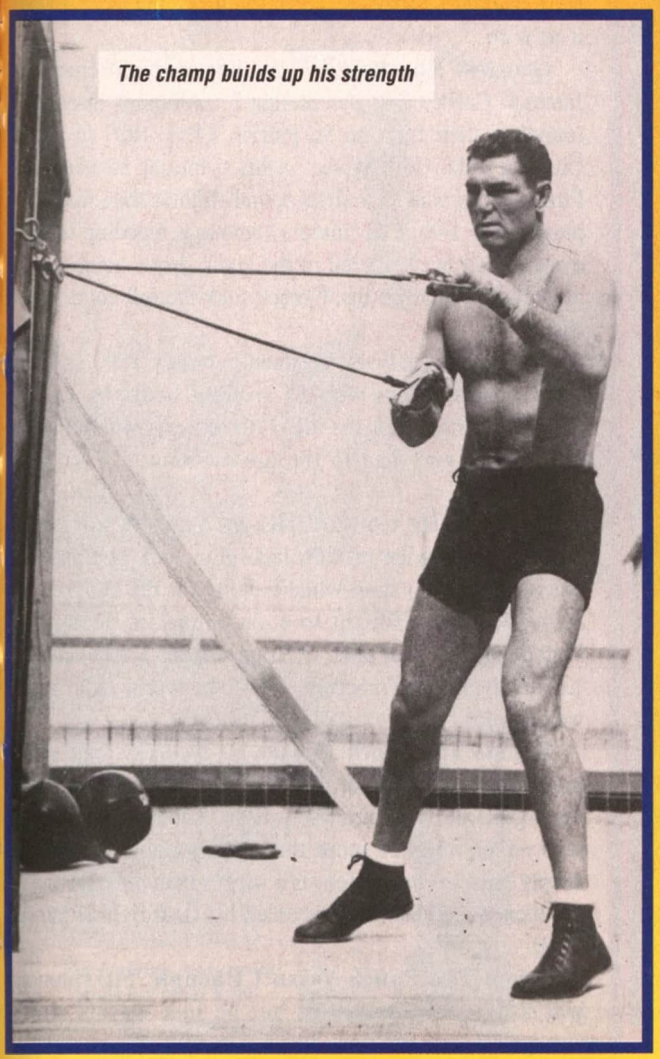
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Maybe it would have been different



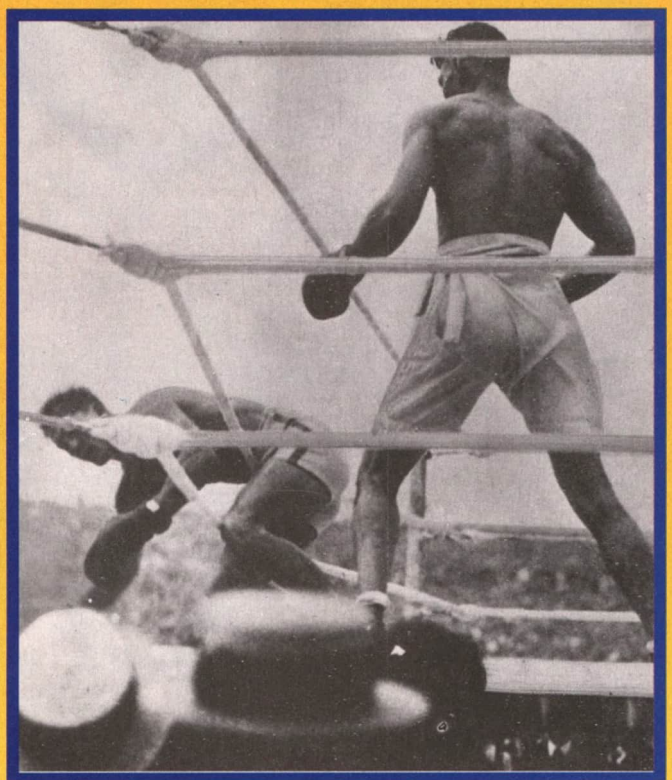
"The Manassa Mauler" hurts Tommy Gibbons with a right to the body



Dempsey prevails in a classic brawl with Luis Firpo



The champ builds up his strength



Challenger Georges Carpentier is sent through the ropes

if Dempsey had taken care of himself better or at least fought once in the three years before Tunney easily dethroned him in 1926. Maybe it wouldn't have mattered—Dempsey had trouble with good movers. Either way, he barely laid a glove on Tunney on the way to losing a 10-round decision and the heavyweight title.

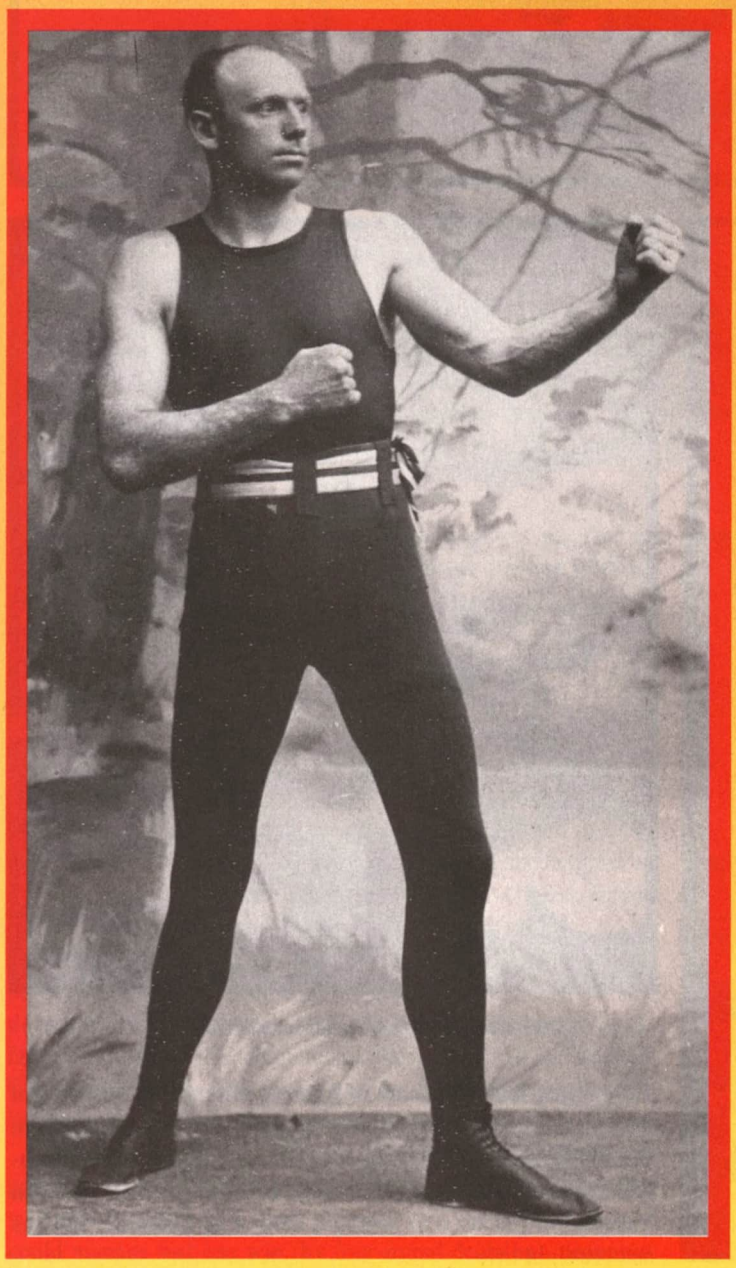
8 BOB FITZSIMMONS

Record: 46-8 (39)

with 21 no-decisions and 1 no-contest

Years Fought: 1883-1914

Titles Held: World Middleweight 1891-'97; World Heavyweight 1897-'99; World Light Heavyweight 1903-'05



Best Punch: Fitzsimmons had heavy hands and it didn't matter much which one he hit you with—overall his arsenal was probably the best of its day. But his hook to the body was the blow that brought him the most attention and the greatest acclaim. He liked to feint to an opponent's head and drive it in deep, straight toward the belly. It didn't always result in the kayo, but often enough it set it up.

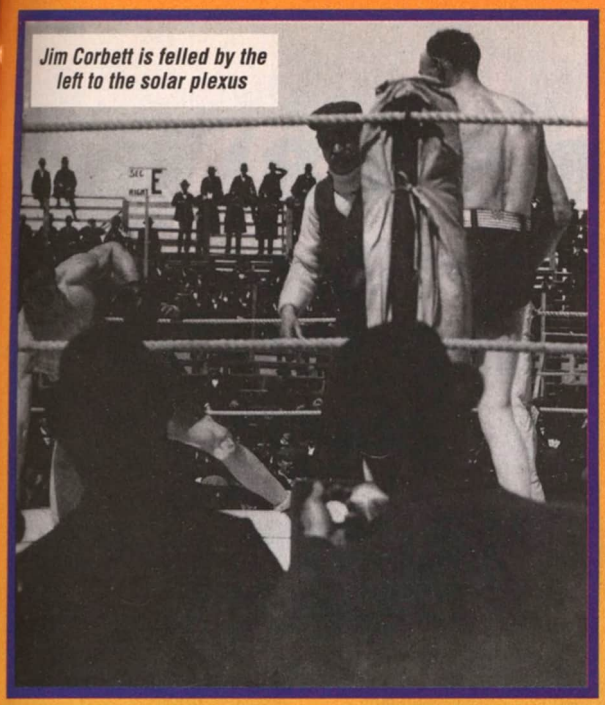
Greatest Knockout: World heavyweight champion James J. Corbett was pummeling Fitzsimmons through 13 rounds in their fight on St. Patrick's Day 1897 in Carson City, Nevada. Corbett was in his prime at 30 years old. Fitzsimmons was 33 and 16 pounds lighter than the champion. In the 14th, Fitzsimmons, who was bleeding over his eye and had been floored in the sixth, drove home a hook to Corbett's solar plexus. Corbett took the full count on the canvas.

Statistical Analysis: Between February 1890 and May 1893, Fitzsimmons won 15 straight bouts by kayo, a remarkable streak for the late-19th century, when no-decisions were very nearly the most commonly recorded results.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Later in his career, Fitzsimmons twice met Philadelphia Jack O'Brien and twice he came up short while looking for the knockout. In July 1904, they fought to a six-round no-decision in Philadelphia. A year later, O'Brien stopped Fitzsimmons in 13 rounds in San Francisco to win the world light heavyweight title.

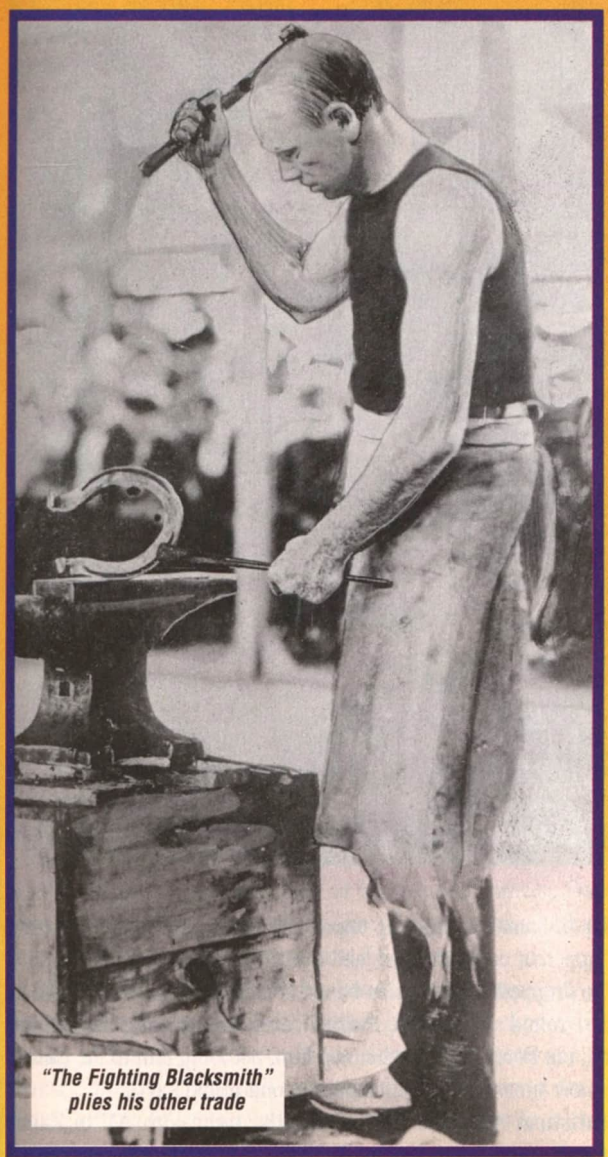
Beyond The Punch: Despite his reed-like legs, receding hairline, and freckles, Fitzsimmons was a rather imposing figure; he had immensely broad shoulders for a man who never weighed more than 172 pounds and a wide, deeply muscled back. He was a superb bodypuncher and an excellent technician who recorded his final fight at the age of 50.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Fitzsimmons was a dynamite puncher, but he just wasn't strong enough to hold off bear-like James J. Jeffries. Jeffries



Jim Corbett is felled by the left to the solar plexus

Fitzsimmons squares off with George Gardner



"The Fighting Blacksmith" plies his other trade

Fitzsimmons stuffs a jab in Bill Lang's face

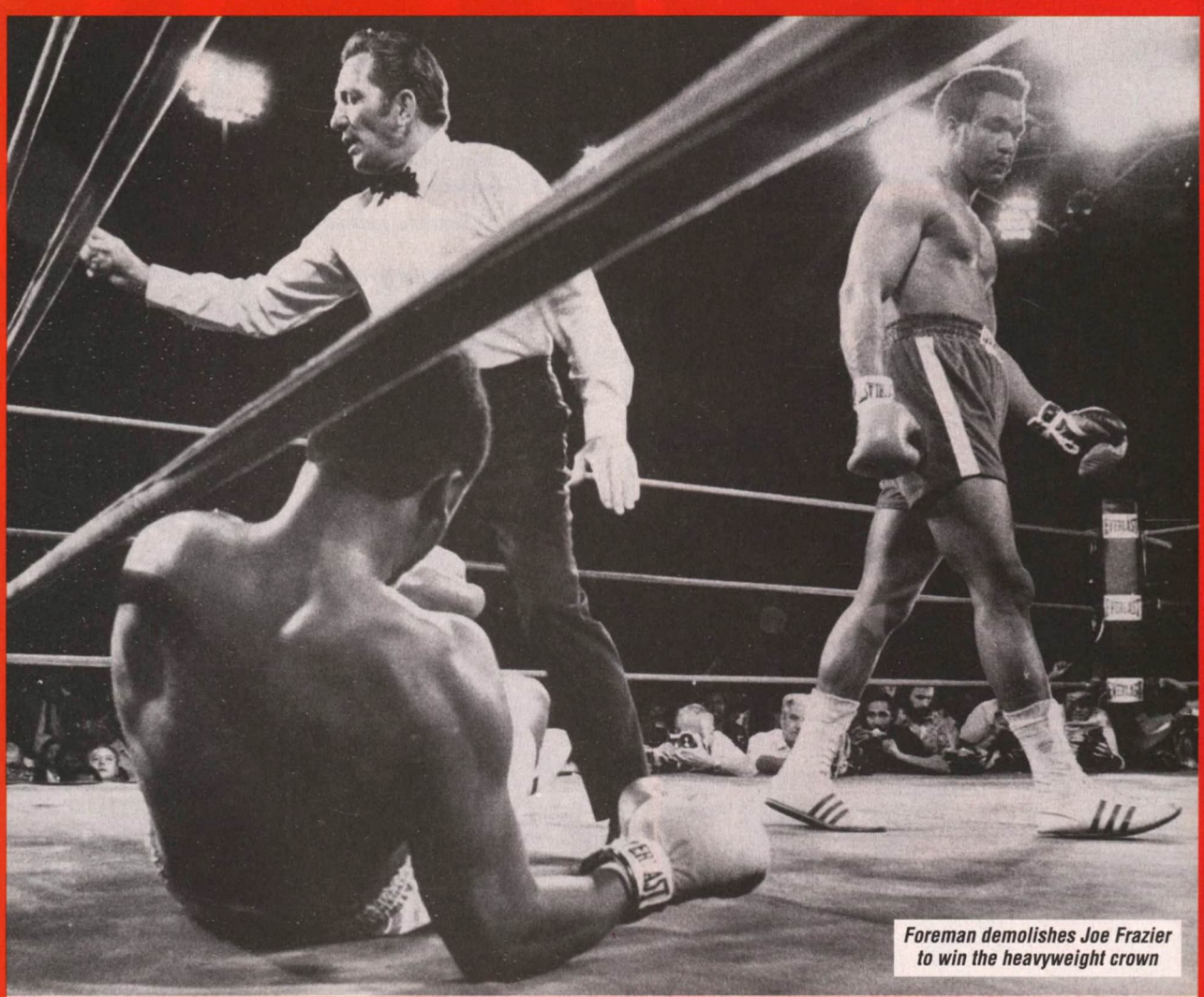
overpowered Fitzsimmons and took the heavyweight title by 11th-round kayo in June 1899 in New York in Fitzsimmons' first title defense. They met again in San Francisco in July 1902, and Jeffries, after taking an early beating, stopped Fitzsimmons with a hook to the jaw in the eighth.

9 GEORGE FOREMAN

Record: 76-5 (68)

Years Fought: 1969-'97

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1973-'74; WBA/IBF Heavyweight 1994-'95



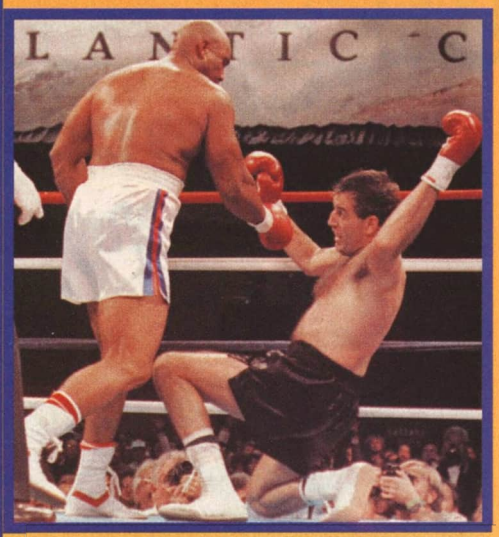
Foreman demolishes Joe Frazier to win the heavyweight crown

Best Punch: It is a testament to Foreman's awesome natural power that his best punch was a roundhouse right, thrown neither on-balance necessarily nor by the book. Yet, it was the roundhouse right that lifted Joe Frazier off the mat in Kingston, that started Ken Norton tumbling in Caracas, and that saved Foreman against Ron Lyle. Of course everyone saw it coming. It didn't matter.

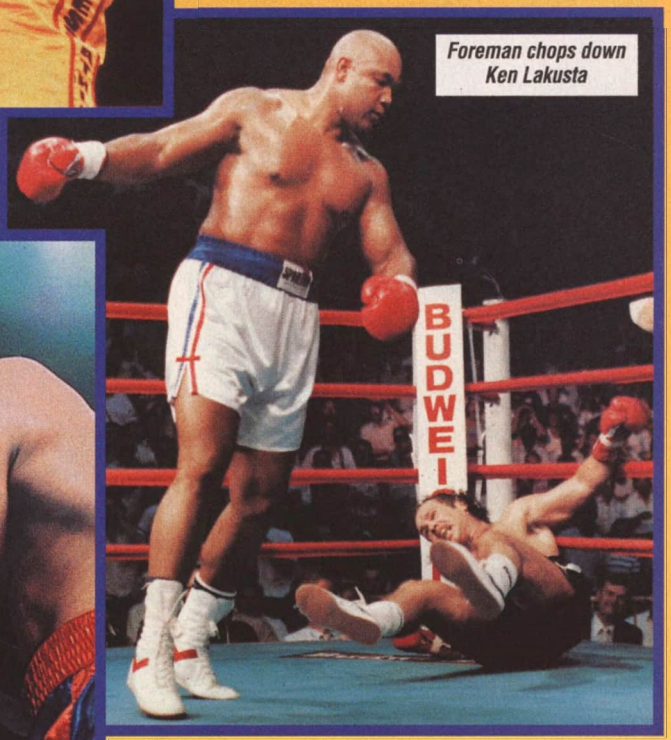
Greatest Knockout: Foreman was a 3-1 underdog when he met Frazier in Jamaica. He was unproved, crude, and green. But his right uppercut couldn't miss, and every time it landed on Frazier's chin he dropped as though de-boned. Three times he went down in the first round. Incredibly, Frazier came out hooking hard in the second, but Foreman overwhelmed him, bombing him to the canvas three more times for a breathtaking second-round kayo.

Statistical Analysis: Going into the fight with Ali in Zaire, Foreman's record was 40-0 with 37 knockouts, a kayo percentage

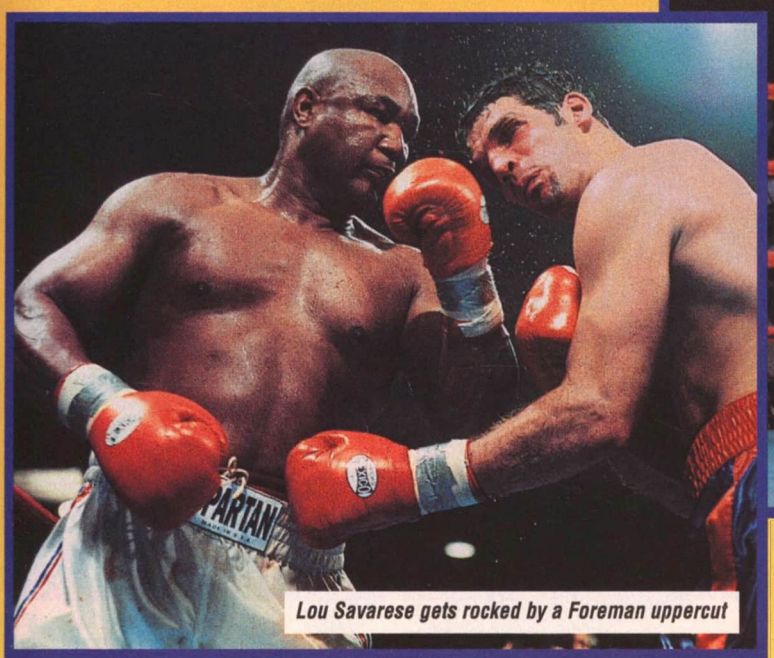
At age 45, Foreman does the unthinkable to Michael Moorer



Big George wipes out Gerry Cooney in the second round



Foreman chops down Ken Lakusta



Lou Savarese gets rocked by a Foreman uppercut

of 92.5 percent. In the latter half of his "second" career, Foreman went the distance in seven of his last 10 fights, bringing his final kayo rate down to a still-exceptional 84 percent.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Foreman was campaigning for a rematch with Ali in March 1977 when he took on slippery Jimmy Young in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Young's defense and pesky counterpunching frustrated Foreman throughout, save for a 30-second stretch in the seventh round when Young was all but out on his feet. But he got through it, peppered Foreman down the stretch, and sent him into a 10-year retirement with a unanimous decision.

Beyond The Punch: The book on the young Foreman was that if you could move around a little and get into the late rounds, you could wear him out and beat him. His technique was terrible, he didn't pace himself, and defense really wasn't in the equation. But he may have been the most powerful prize fighter who ever lived.

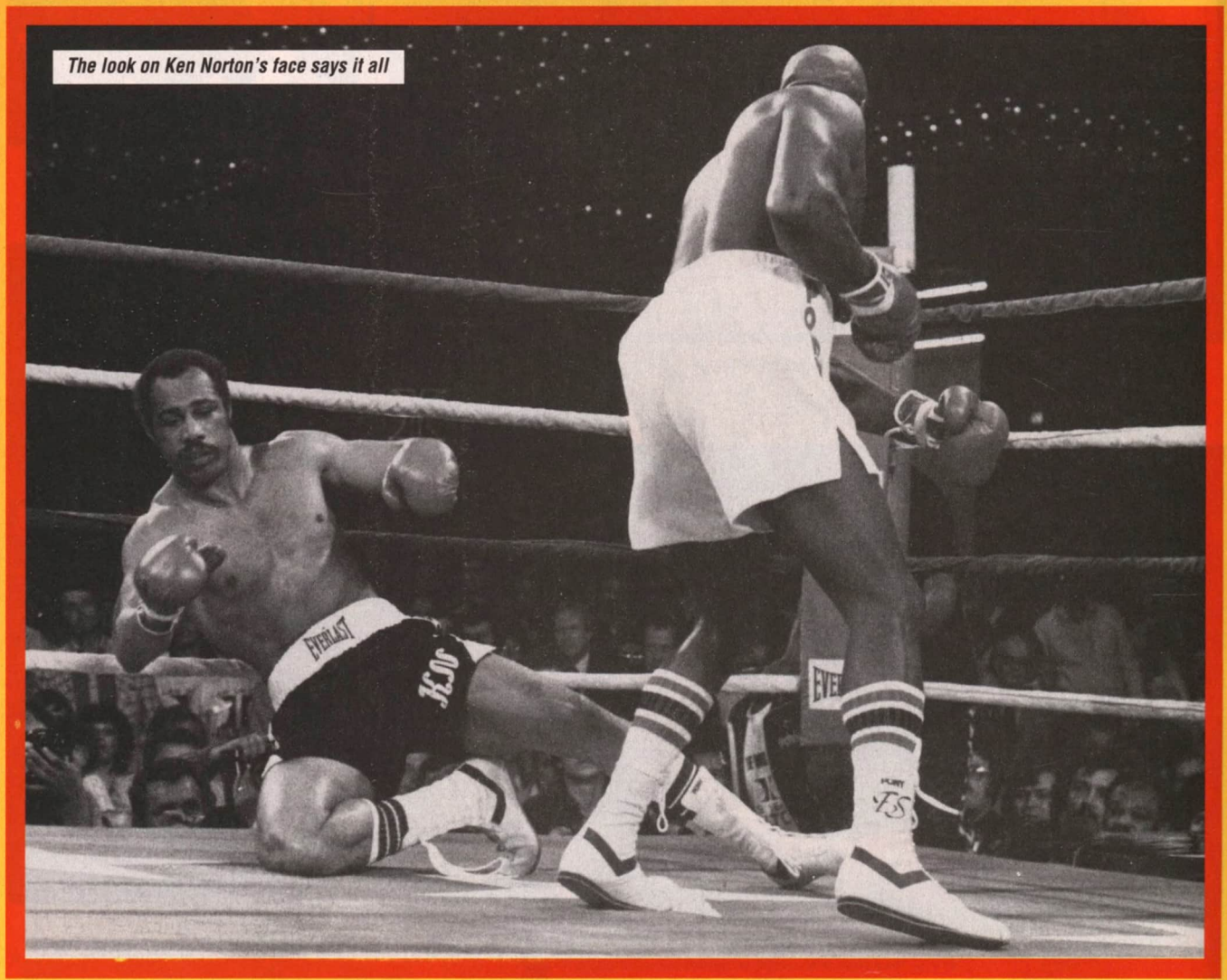
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: You get the sense looking back that it didn't matter how hard Foreman punched when he and Ali got together in October 1974. He could have been twice as powerful as he was and it wouldn't have changed the outcome. It wasn't about strength. It was about smarts. Ali had them. Foreman didn't.

10 EARNIE SHAVERS

Record: 72-13-1 (67)

Years Fought: 1969-'95

Titles Held: none

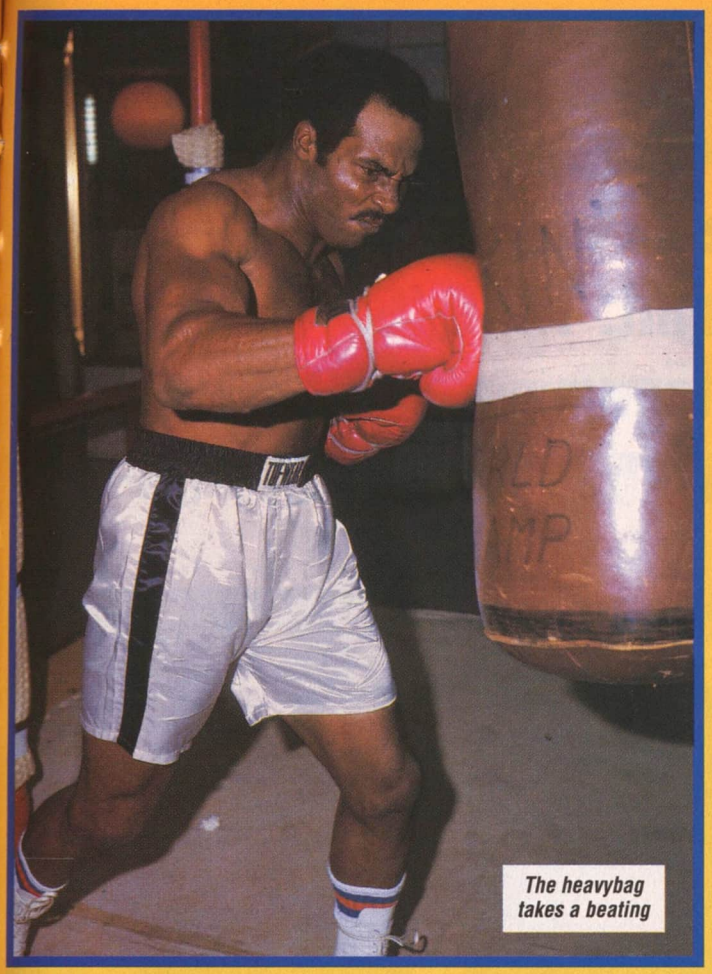

The look on Ken Norton's face says it all

Best Punch: Shavers was a heavy-handed puncher on either side, but there are those who will tell you his overhand right was the single hardest punch in the history of the sport. No less than Muhammad Ali called Shavers the hardest hitter he'd ever faced, and this was coming from a guy who'd fought George Foreman, Sonny Liston, and Joe Frazier. Shavers had many flaws as a fighter, but the power in his right fist made up for most of them.

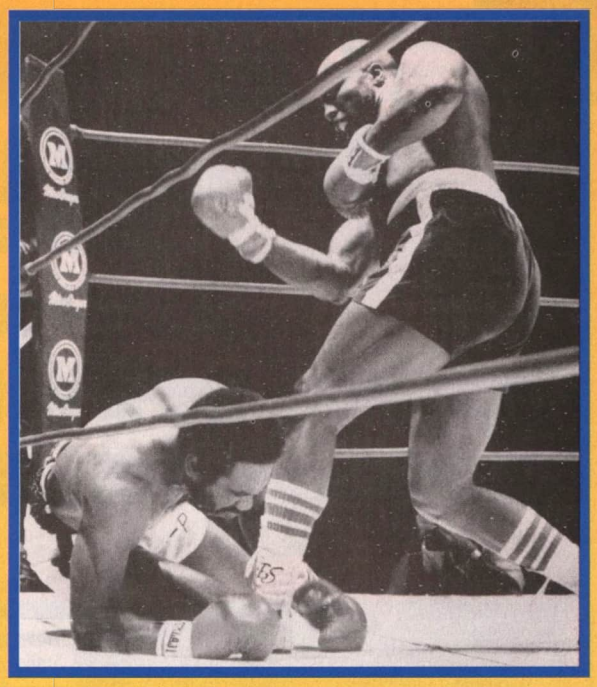
Greatest Knockout: Jimmy Ellis was the former WBA heavyweight titlist when he met Shavers, a rising contender, in June 1973. Far more skilled than his crude opponent, Ellis jumped on Shavers early in the first and pummeled him with everything he had. Whether Shavers was hurt, as he appeared to be, or playing possum, as he later claimed, he launched a right uppercut in the middle of an Ellis flurry that found the sweet spot on Ellis' chin and dropped him for the full count.

Statistical Analysis: How's this for a streak? Between November 1969 and June 1973, Shavers went 45-2 with 44 knockouts, stopping Jimmy Young and Jimmy Ellis along the way.

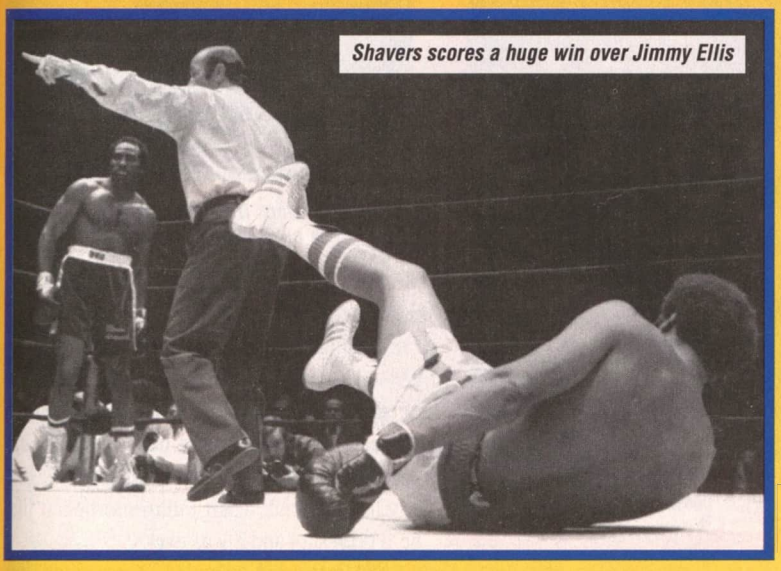
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Shavers may have been past his prime in 1980 when he went against human anvil Randy "Tex" Cobb, but he still was one of the hardest punchers in the world.



The heavybag takes a beating



Shavers bombs out Eddie Porett in the third



Shavers scores a huge win over Jimmy Ellis

Henry Clark succumbs to Shavers' famous right hand

And any degradation in ability due to his age was offset by Cobb's wholesale lack of skills, especially on defense. Shavers bombed away at Cobb early, landing right hand after right hand, but Cobb soaked them all up, waited for Shavers to tire, and stopped him in eight wild, sloppy, and wonderfully entertaining rounds.

Beyond The Punch: Shavers was very much a one-trick pony. His chin was unreliable. He could be clumsy. He bled. His stamina wasn't questionable, it was a known liability; if you could get past the first five rounds you had a hell of a chance. But all he had to do was touch you once with the right. If he did, chances were good you'd be gone.

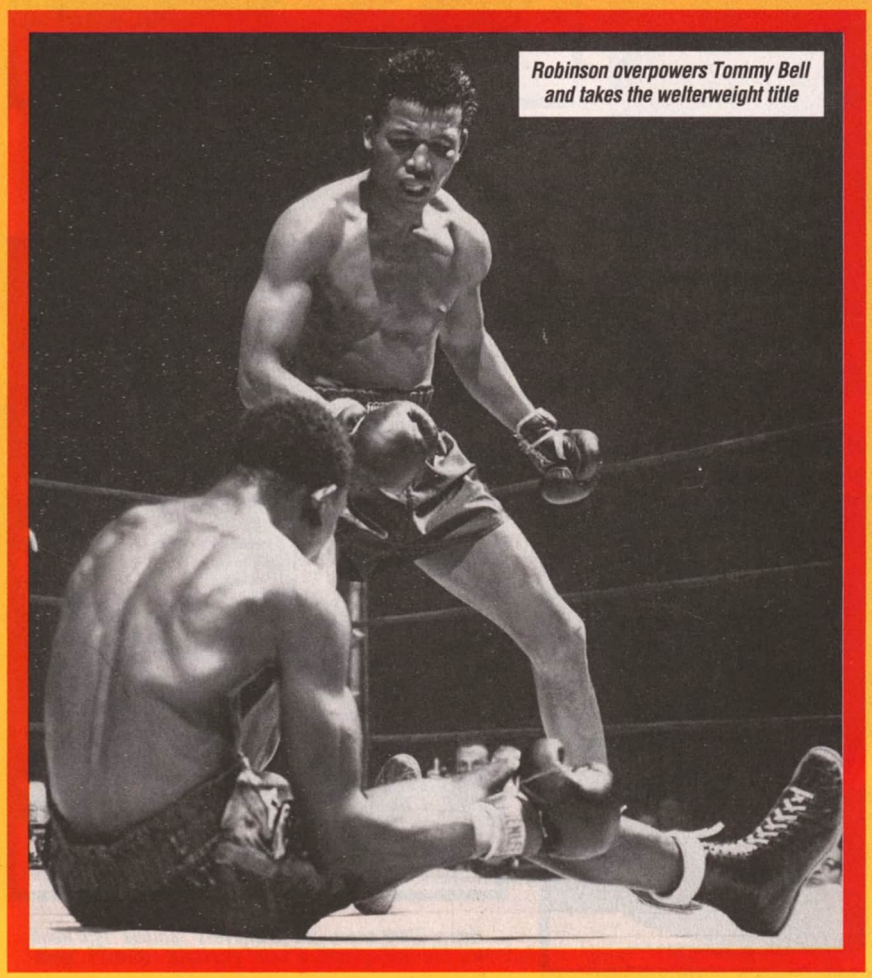
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Shavers had two chances against Larry Holmes. The first was a WBC title eliminator in 1978, and Shavers barely touched Holmes on the way to dropping a lopsided 12-round decision. He did better in the sequel, flattening Holmes in the seventh with his signature overhand right. Remarkably, Holmes rose, steadied himself, and stopped Shavers on cuts four rounds later.

11 RAY ROBINSON

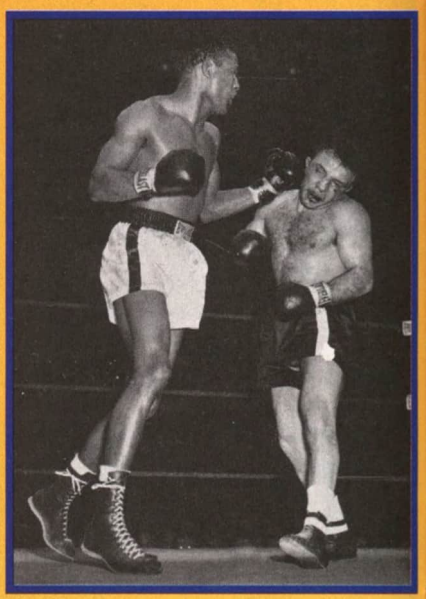
Record: 175-19-6 (109)
with 2 no-contests

Years Fought: 1940-'65

Titles Held: World Welterweight 1946-'51; World Middleweight 1951, '51-'52, '55-'57, '57, '58-'60



Robinson overpowers Tommy Bell and takes the welterweight title



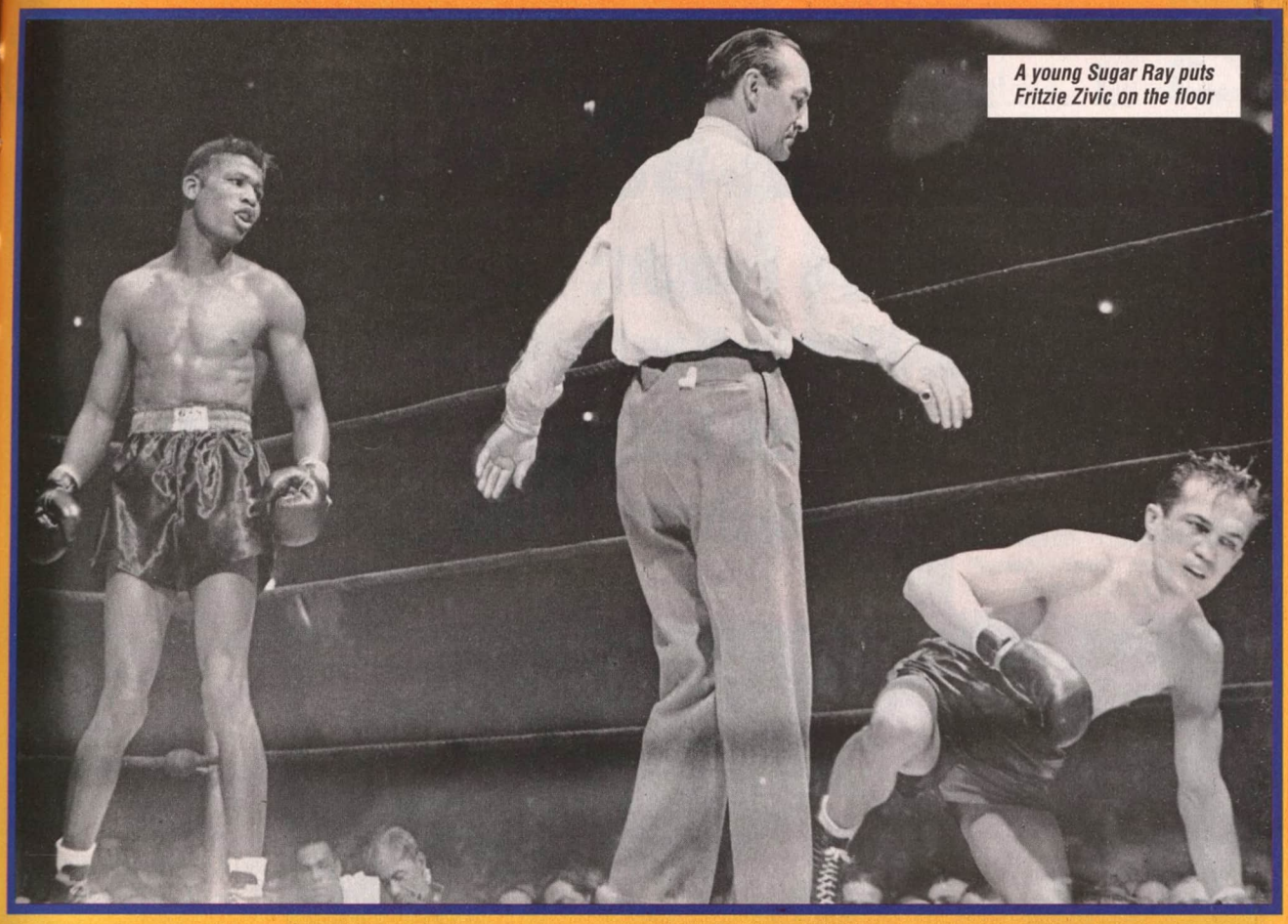
Robinson stops iron-chinned Jake LaMotta for his first middleweight title

Best Punch: Robinson's left hook, which was only slightly better than his right cross, wasn't an ordinary left hook—it was versatile. It could be wide, or it could run five inches. It could come as a lead, or after a right hand, or after a hook to the body, or after a jab. Either way, Robinson didn't throw the hook to set you up for other punches, or to keep you off him. He threw it to knock you out.

Greatest Knockout: A lot of people have called Robinson's 1957 one-punch, fifth-round stoppage of anvil-chinned Gene Fullmer the perfect knockout. It's hard to argue. It was their second meeting, just four months after Fullmer decisioned Robinson for the middleweight crown. He was bulling forward like he always did, right into Robinson, when the 35-year-old legend took a half step back and rammed home the hook. It didn't look like anything special. Then Fullmer dropped like he'd been shot and it was over.

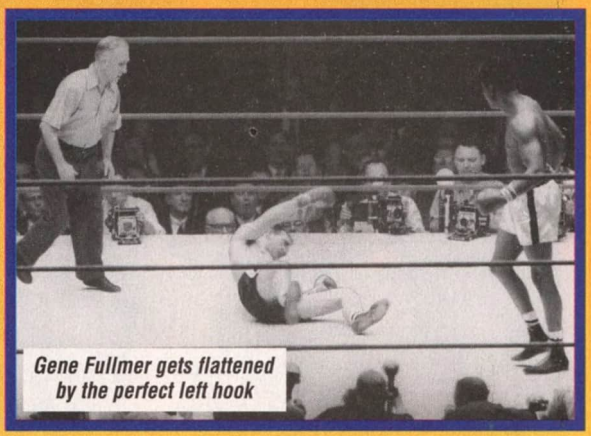
Statistical Analysis: In a career that spanned 200 fights and 24 active years, only twice did Robinson go through a calendar year without scoring a knockout. In 1948 he decisioned, in order, Ossie Harris, Henry Brimm, Bernard Docusen, Kid Gavilan, and Bobby Lee. And in '58, he fought just once, scoring a 15-round decision over Carmen Basilio.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: A prime, welterweight Robinson faced lightweight world champion Sammy Angott three times—in 1941, '42, and '46—and Angott took him the full 10 rounds each time. That's no commentary on Robinson's hitting power; Angott was



A young Sugar Ray puts Fritzie Zivic on the floor

Randy Turpin absorbs a Robinson right



Gene Fullmer gets flattened by the perfect left hook

stopped just once in 132 fights, that by Beau Jack.

Beyond The Punch: Has it been said enough yet that Robinson could do everything in the ring? The consensus pound-for-pound best ever was not only a great puncher but also an excellent technician, a showman and star, and he was tough as all get-out. If you could sit down and draw up plans to make a perfect fighter, the one you make would probably be damned close to Robinson.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: The best Robinson there ever was didn't hit hard enough to discourage iron-jawed Jake LaMotta in their second match, in Detroit in February 1943. Yes, LaMotta was more middleweight than welterweight, but Robinson was 40-0 going in with 29 stops, and already everyone knew he was special. LaMotta found out later, too.

12 RUBEN OLIVARES

Record: 88-13-3 (78)

Years Fought: 1965-'88

Titles Held: World Bantamweight 1969-'70, 1970-'72; WBA Featherweight 1974; WBC Featherweight 1975

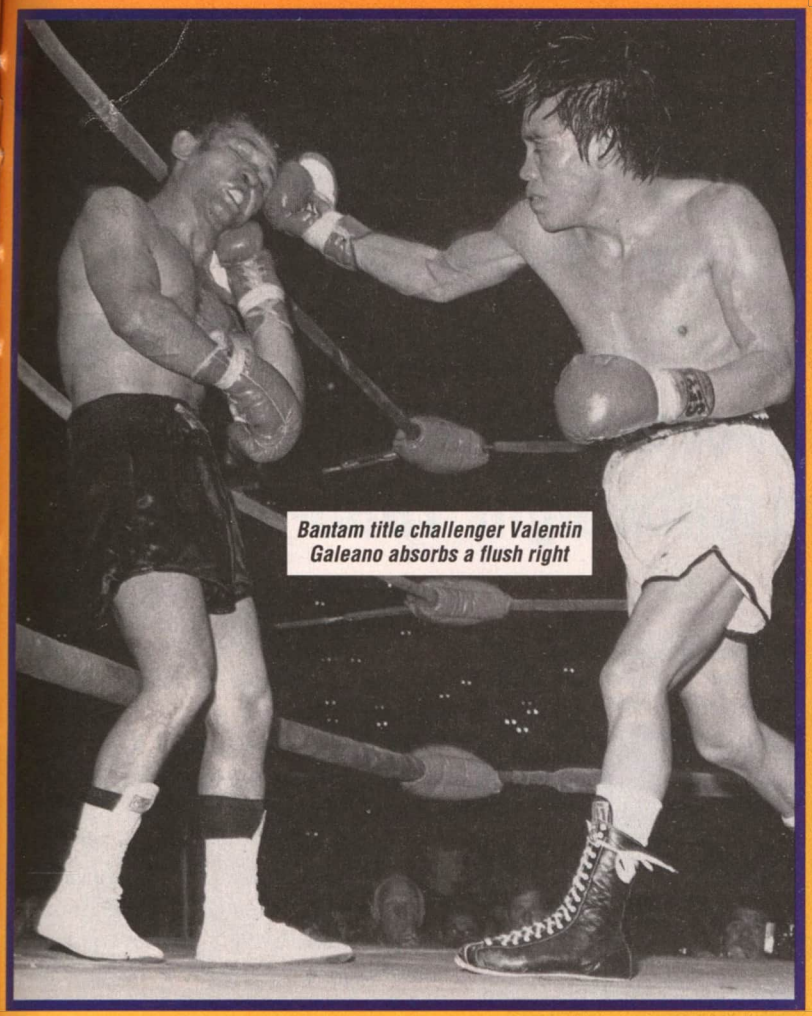
Olivares fires a hook at Jesus Pimentel

Best Punch: Olivares' left hook was the bantamweight equivalent of Joe Frazier's and then some. It didn't matter if he barely trained, partied till all hours of the morning, and a lot of the time thought defense was for sissies. He had that screaming left hook, and it terrorized the bantamweight and featherweight divisions for a good 10 years. It probably was the single hardest punch in bantamweight history.

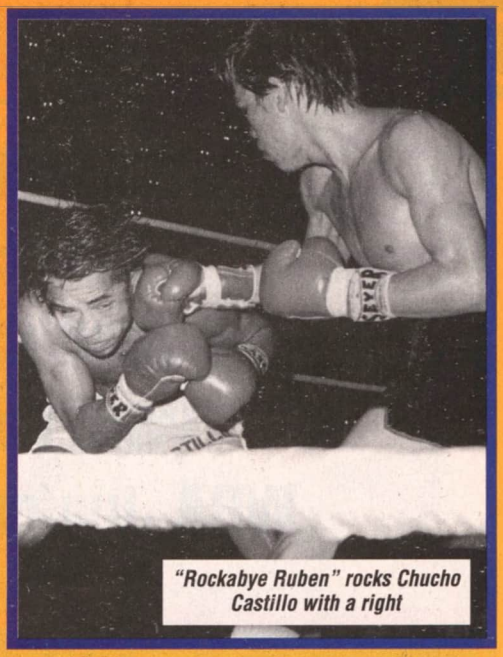
Greatest Knockout: In August 1969, Olivares challenged stubborn bantamweight champion Lionel Rose in California. In front of 17,000 deliriously partisan fans, Olivares raked Rose with his hook in the second and floored him. Olivares battered him relentlessly over the next two rounds, then floored him three times in the fifth and stopped him. Rose, who had lost just twice before in 36 fights, was never the same, losing eight of his last 16.

Statistical Analysis: You like numbers? Consider: Olivares knocked out 23 guys in a row right out of the box. He stopped 54 of his first 57 opponents. Going into his first title fight, Olivares was 50-0-1 with 48 knockouts—a kayo rate of 94 percent. During the years 1965, '66, and '69, Olivares had nine, 13, and 10 fights, respectively. He won every one by knockout. What a puncher.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Chucho Castillo was a bothersome thorn in Olivares' side. He countered and boxed well enough to last the full route and drop a unanimous decision to



Bantam title challenger Valentin Galeano absorbs a flush right



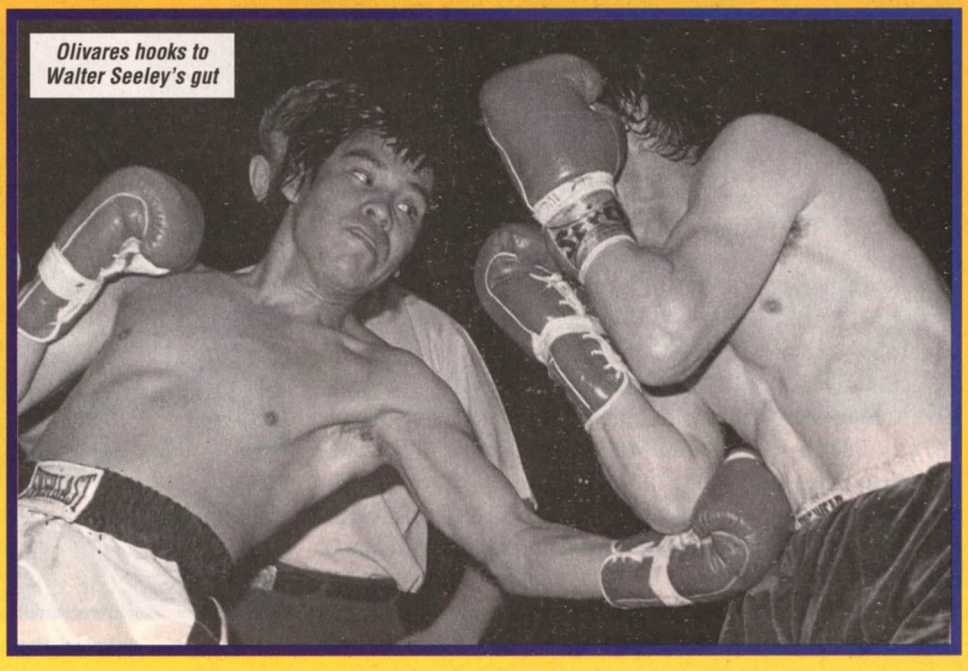
"Rockabye Ruben" rocks Chucho Castillo with a right

Bobby Chacon tumbles in round one

Olivares in their first fight, and in their second six months later, he stopped Olivares on cuts and dethroned him. Olivares rebounded to decision Castillo again in April 1971 and regain the crown. But in 44 rounds, Castillo never once touched the canvas.

Beyond The Punch: You'd never guess it looking at his record, but when he wanted to be, Olivares was a superb counter-puncher and could play defense brilliantly. When he was in with a guy who just wouldn't go—Castillo again—Olivares could jab, feint, move his legs, all the stuff you wouldn't expect him to be good at.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Olivares was past his best days and over his best weight when he went to war with future star Alexis Arguello in November 1974 in California. Defending the WBA featherweight title, Olivares led on the cards after 12 rounds, but in the 13th walked into a hook and was counted out moments later.



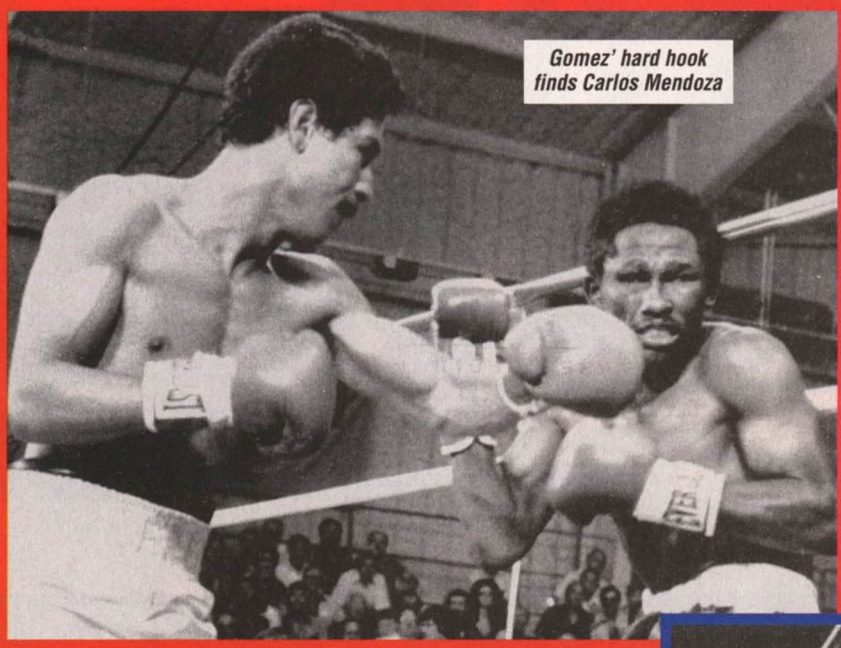
Olivares hooks to Walter Seeley's gut

13 WILFREDO GOMEZ

Record: 44-3-1 (42)

Years Fought: 1974-'89

Titles Held: WBC Super Bantamweight 1977-'82; WBC Featherweight 1984; WBA Junior Lightweight 1985-'86



Gomez' hard hook finds Carlos Mendoza

Best Punch: Gomez' right cross, delivered as a counter over a lazy left, or as the second half of an exquisitely delivered one-two, was a howitzer. His hook broke a lot of noses, too, and scrambled probably as many senses, but Gomez' right cross was one of the perfect punches of the 1980s, when a lot of very good fighters threw a lot of very good punches. It led him to 17 successful title defenses—all by kayo—and to general recognition as the best junior featherweight ever.

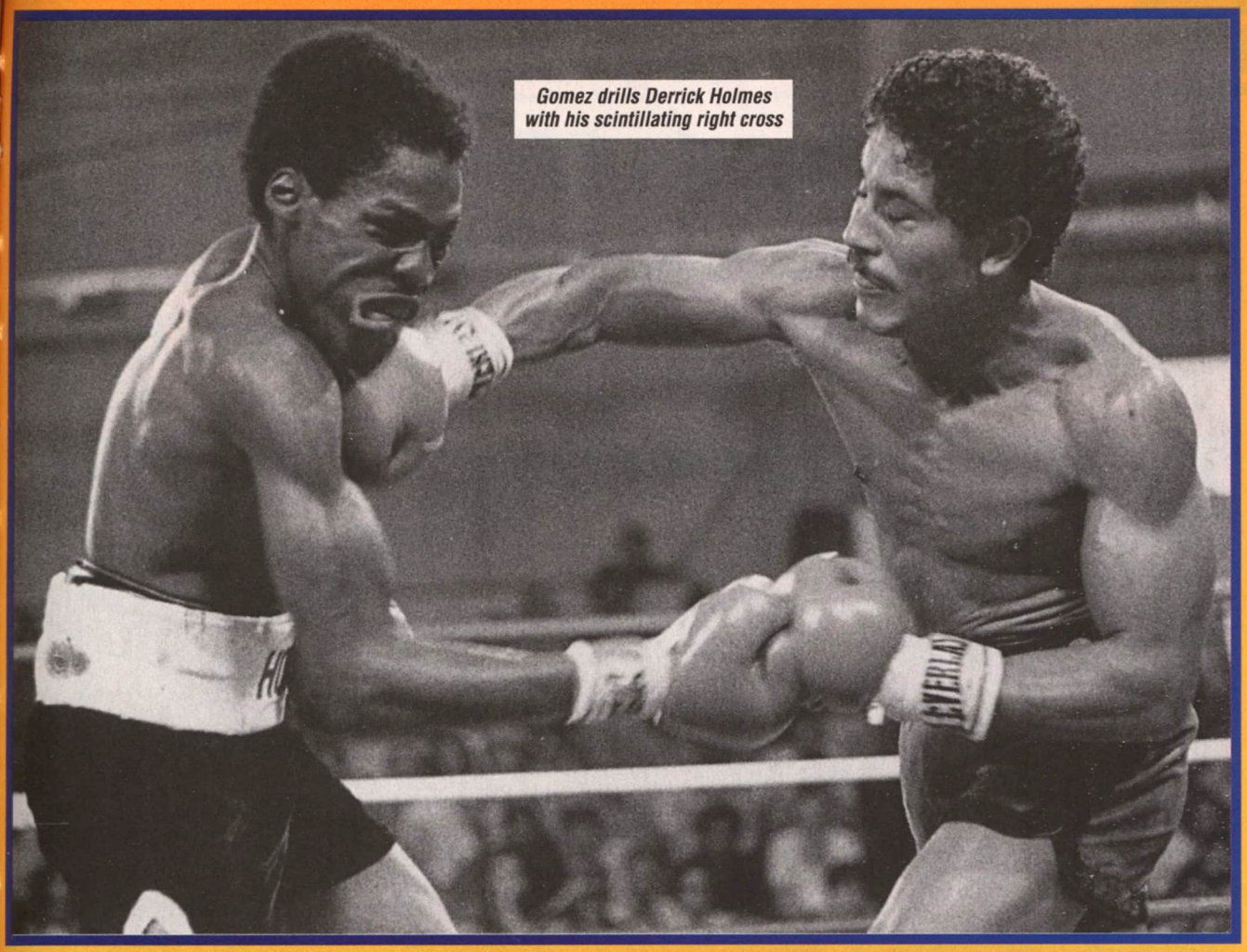
Greatest Knockout: In a matchup of power-punching superstars, Gomez met fellow living legend Carlos Zarate in October 1978 in Puerto Rico. Zarate, the long-reigning WBC bantamweight titlist, was 54-0 (53). He dropped the first two rounds to the more mobile Gomez, but won the third. Then Gomez erupted in the fourth, dropping Zarate three times, and stopped him in the fifth.

Statistical Analysis: The only thing more impressive than Gomez' title-fight kayo percentage of 78 percent is his career kayo rate of 88 percent. And get this: After drawing against Jacinto Fuentes in his pro debut, Gomez won 32 straight fights by knockout.

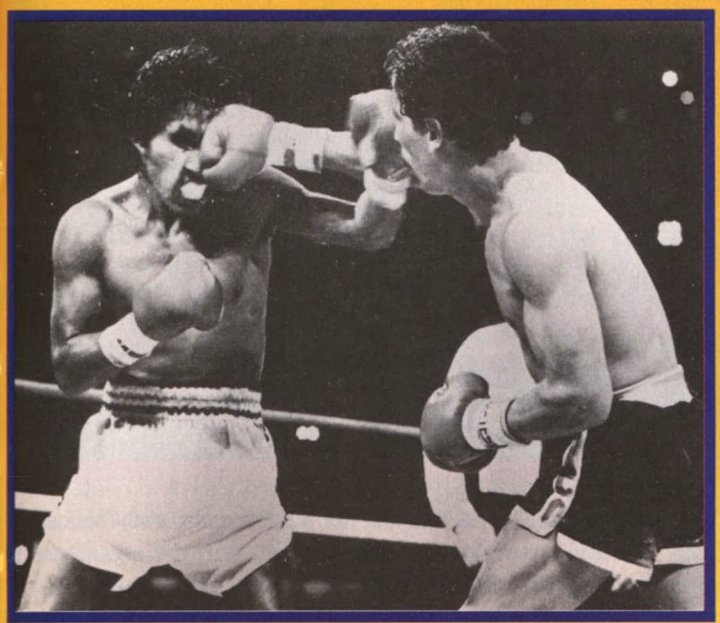
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Gomez challenged fellow Puerto Rican hero Juan LaPorte for the WBC featherweight title in March 1984. Although Gomez had things his way through most of the fight and won a fairly lopsided unanimous decision, the iron-chinned LaPorte took everything he had to offer, much of it while pinned against the ropes.

Beyond The Punch: Be clear about this: Mechanically, Gomez was brilliant. At his best, and when he wanted to be, he was untouchable. You couldn't hit the guy. He was exceptionally good at slipping leads and countering with hard, accurate punches

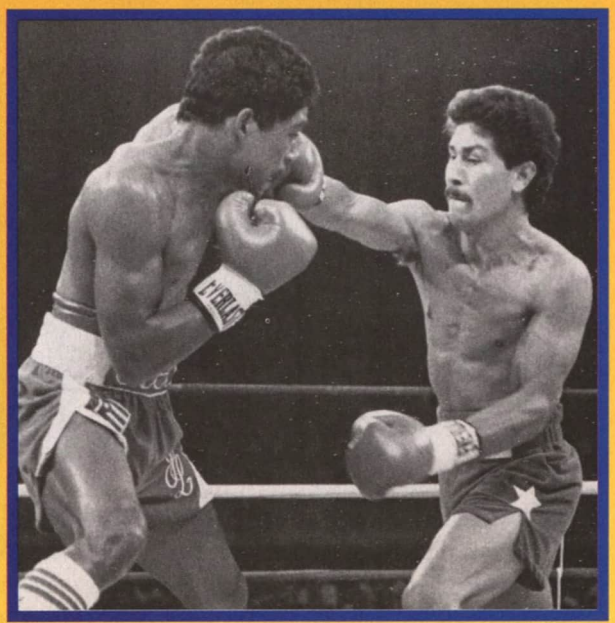
Nestor Jimenez struggles to stay up



Gomez drills Derrick Holmes with his scintillating right cross



Lupe Pintor gets a face full of Gomez' right-hand power



"Bazooka" bangs Juan LaPorte with a right

to the head or the body. The flaws? His chin wasn't the greatest and he didn't like to train all that much. But overall he was a magnificent fighter.

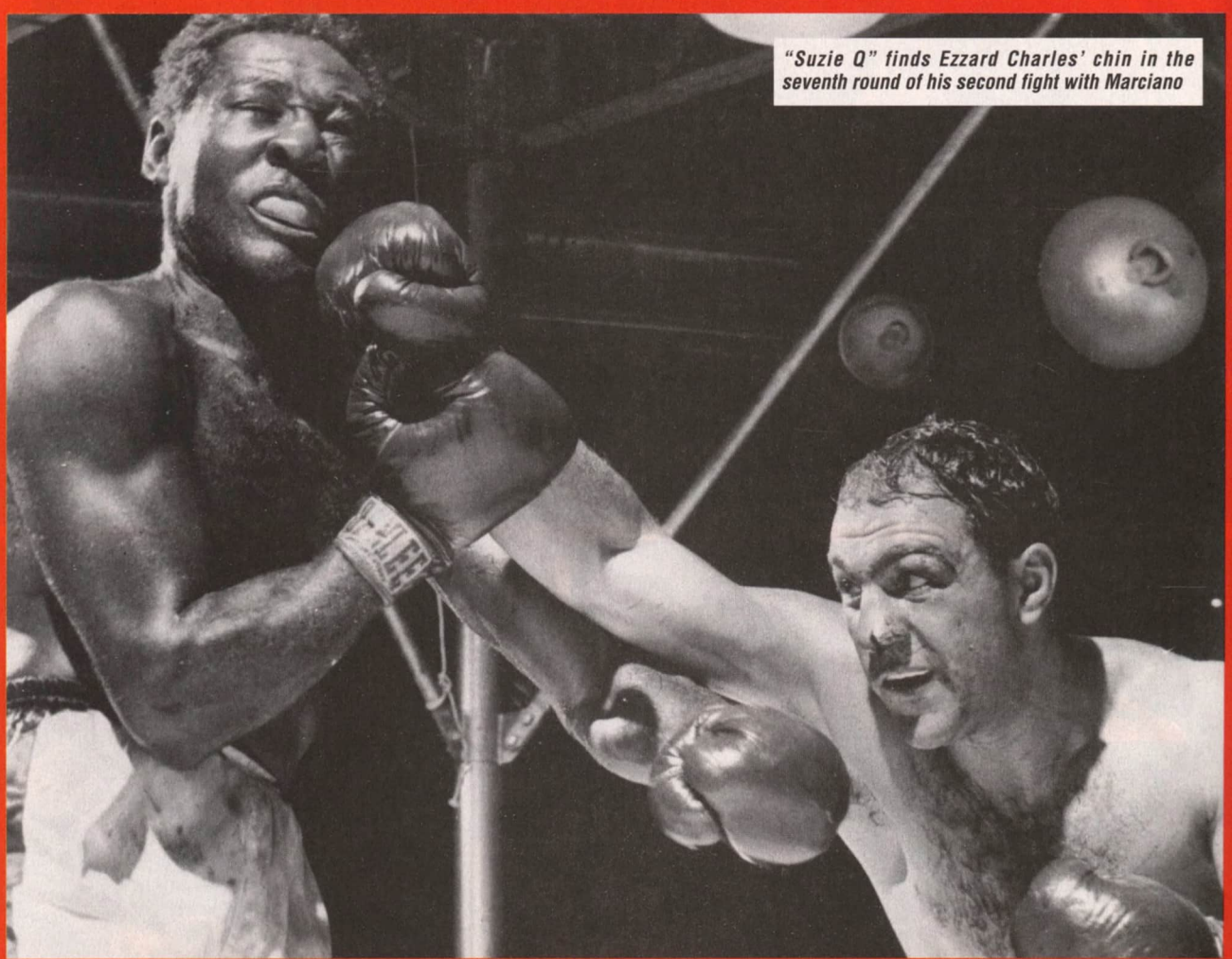
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In the biggest fight of his life, Gomez miscalculated terribly while preparing for his challenge of the great featherweight champion Salvador Sanchez in August 1981. Weakened by trying to make featherweight—even though he was coming up in weight—Gomez was floored in the first, had his right cheekbone busted, and took a terrible beating on the way to getting stopped in the eighth.

14 ROCKY MARCIANO

Record: 49-0 (43)

Years Fought: 1947-'55

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1952-'55



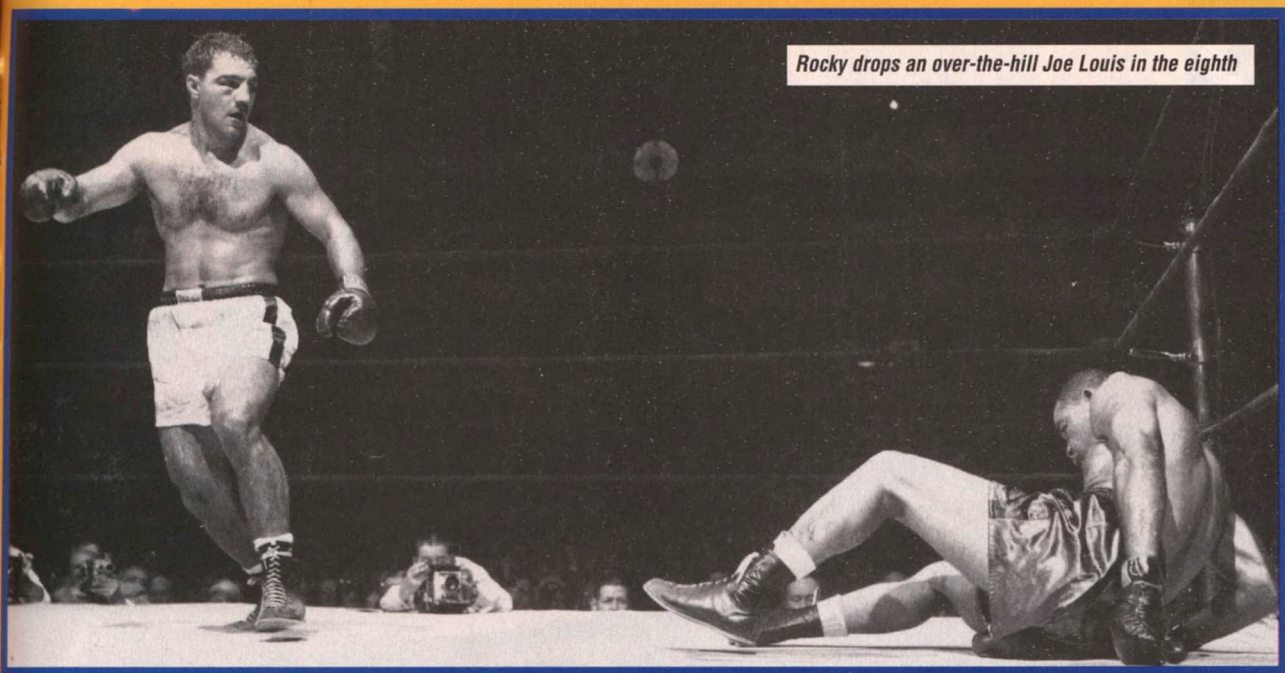
"Suzie Q" finds Ezzard Charles' chin in the seventh round of his second fight with Marciano

Best Punch: Marciano hit like hell with both hands, but the overhand right was the one he went to most often for the kayo. He threw it sometimes like he was back on the ball field, raring back and giving it some extra snap at the end, but just as often it was short and you didn't even knew he threw it until the other guy was quivering on the mat with the referee over him and Marciano in the neutral corner.

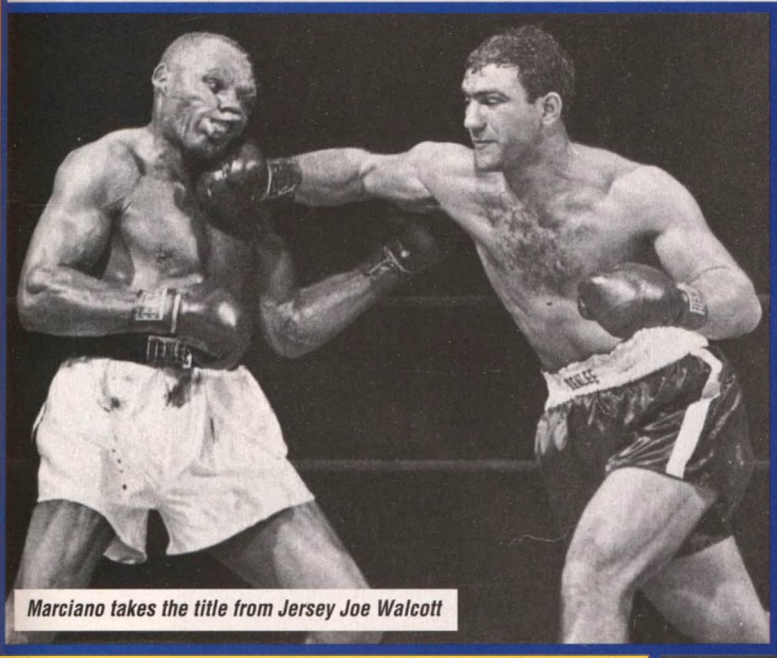
Greatest Knockout: If you want to show a Golden Glover the proper way to knock a guy cold with a single right hand, show him the 13th round of Marciano's legendary, title-winning fight with Jersey Joe Walcott. Marciano and Walcott beat the hell out of one another for 12½ rounds, with Walcott in the lead down the stretch. They both started rights. Suzie Q got there first. End of fight.

Statistical Analysis: Today, we see punchers build up big kayo records early in their careers only to watch that kayo percentage plummet when they start to face top-10 or world class competition. It was the other way around with Marciano; of his six career decision wins, five came before he won the title.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Marciano faced journeyman Ted Lowry in 1949 and again a year later and both times had to settle for a 10-round decision. It was nothing to be ashamed

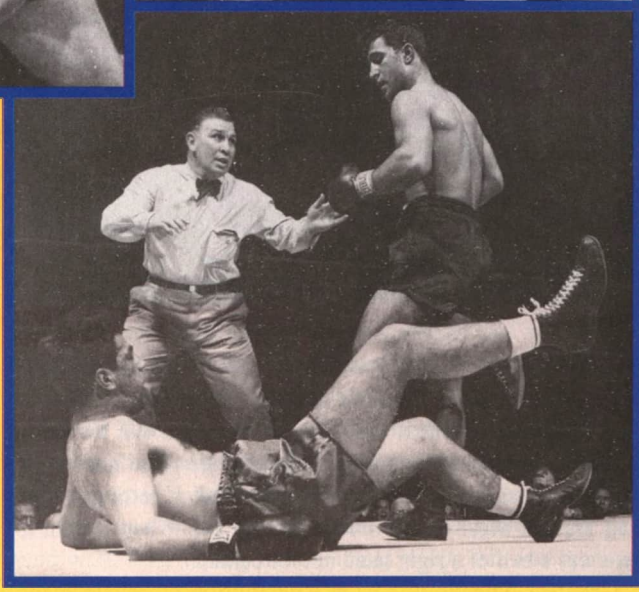


Rocky drops an over-the-hill Joe Louis in the eighth



Marciano takes the title from Jersey Joe Walcott

Marciano wrecks Rex Layne with a right



Carmine Vingo hits the canvas in round six

of; Lowry, who ended his career at 64-66-9 (41), also went the distance in losing efforts against Joey Maxim, Roland LaStarza, Jimmy Bivins, and Archie Moore.

Beyond The Punch: Over the years Marciano has acquired the reputation of having been a terribly clumsy, utterly defenseless fighter whose only strength was his strength. When he started out, that was true. But by the time he retired, he was reasonably skilled at bobbing and weaving under punches and working his way into range rather than simply bulling his way in.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Marciano's punch wasn't what got him by former champion Ezzard Charles in their first match, in June 1954. Over the second half of the fight Charles stood right in Marciano's zone and slugged with him. He rarely backed off and rarely missed. He was splendid. Marciano won the decision anyway, and it wasn't his punch that did it. It was everything else.

15 SONNY LISTON

Record: 50-4 (39)

Years Fought: 1953-'70

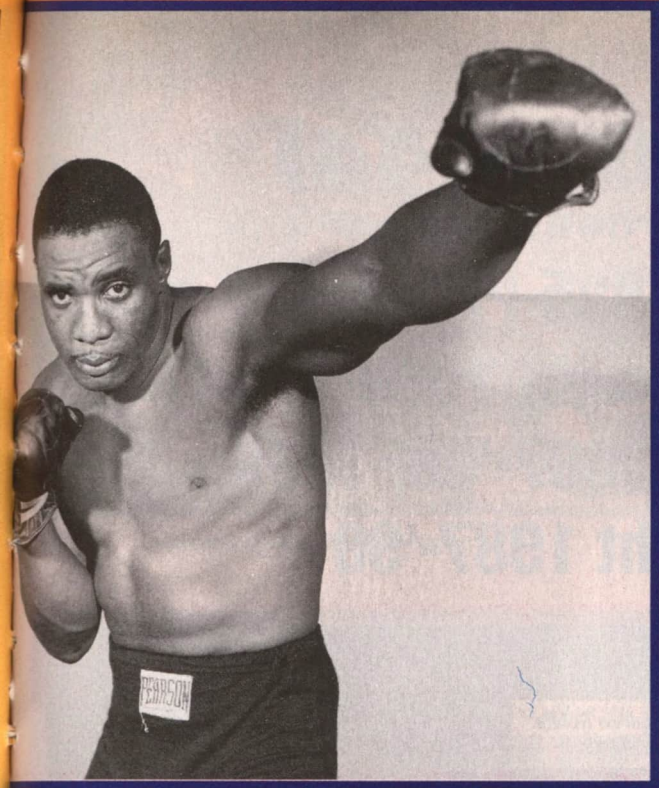
Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1962-'64

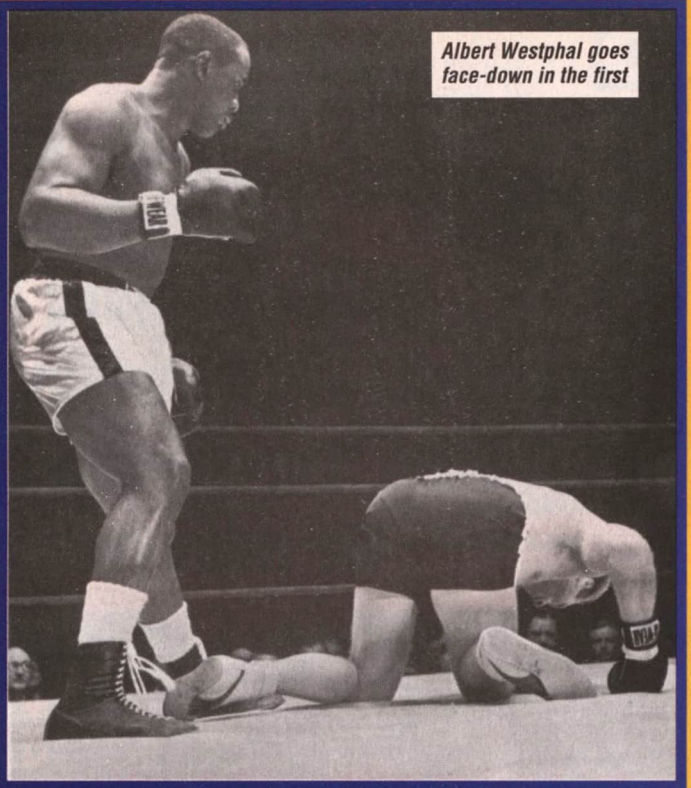
Liston rocks Cleveland Williams with a right

Best Punch: Liston wasn't as reliant on his left hook as were most of history's great left-hookers—he didn't have to be. But it still was the best punch in his arsenal, even if a lot of historians prefer the jab. The hook was what Liston cranked up when he was tired of letting a guy hang around. Most of the time it did the job. When it didn't, there was a hell of a right hand not far behind.

Greatest Knockout: Liston's demolition of heavyweight champion Floyd Patterson in Comiskey Park in 1962 wasn't unexpected. There was a reason Cus D'Amato kept Patterson away from Liston, and it had nothing to do with Liston's criminal leanings. That it wasn't a surprise doesn't detract from its worthiness. Liston pounced on Patterson at the opening bell, hurt him the moment he started landing, and stretched him almost without breaking a sweat. It was man against boy.

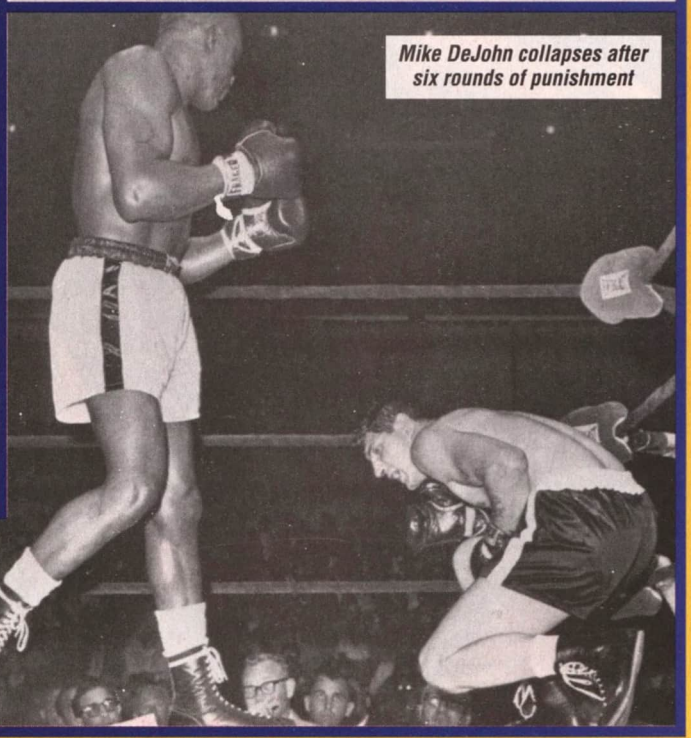
Statistical Analysis: Most of us wouldn't have guessed at the start of his career that Liston would develop into an all-time great puncher. In his first nine fights, he scored just two





Albert Westphal goes face-down in the first

Liston uppercuts Floyd Patterson and takes the title



Mike DeJohn collapses after six rounds of punishment

knockouts. In 1954 and '55, he went the distance in five straight fights, one of which was a decision loss to Marty Marshall, who broke Liston's jaw. From April '55 on, however, his record was 42-3 (37), a kayo rate of 82 percent.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Twice in 1958, useful journeyman Bert Whitehurst extended Liston 10 full rounds on the way to losing by decision. Liston wasn't alone; light heavyweight greats Harold Johnson and Bob Foster also fought Whitehurst and failed to stop him.

Beyond The Punch: For a big puncher, Liston was reasonably light-footed, even if guys who could move very well troubled him almost from the very start of his career. Technically he was sound, also fairly unusual for a big slugger, and in his prime he could punch all night long if that was what it took. Until the second Ali fight at least, his chin was very dependable.

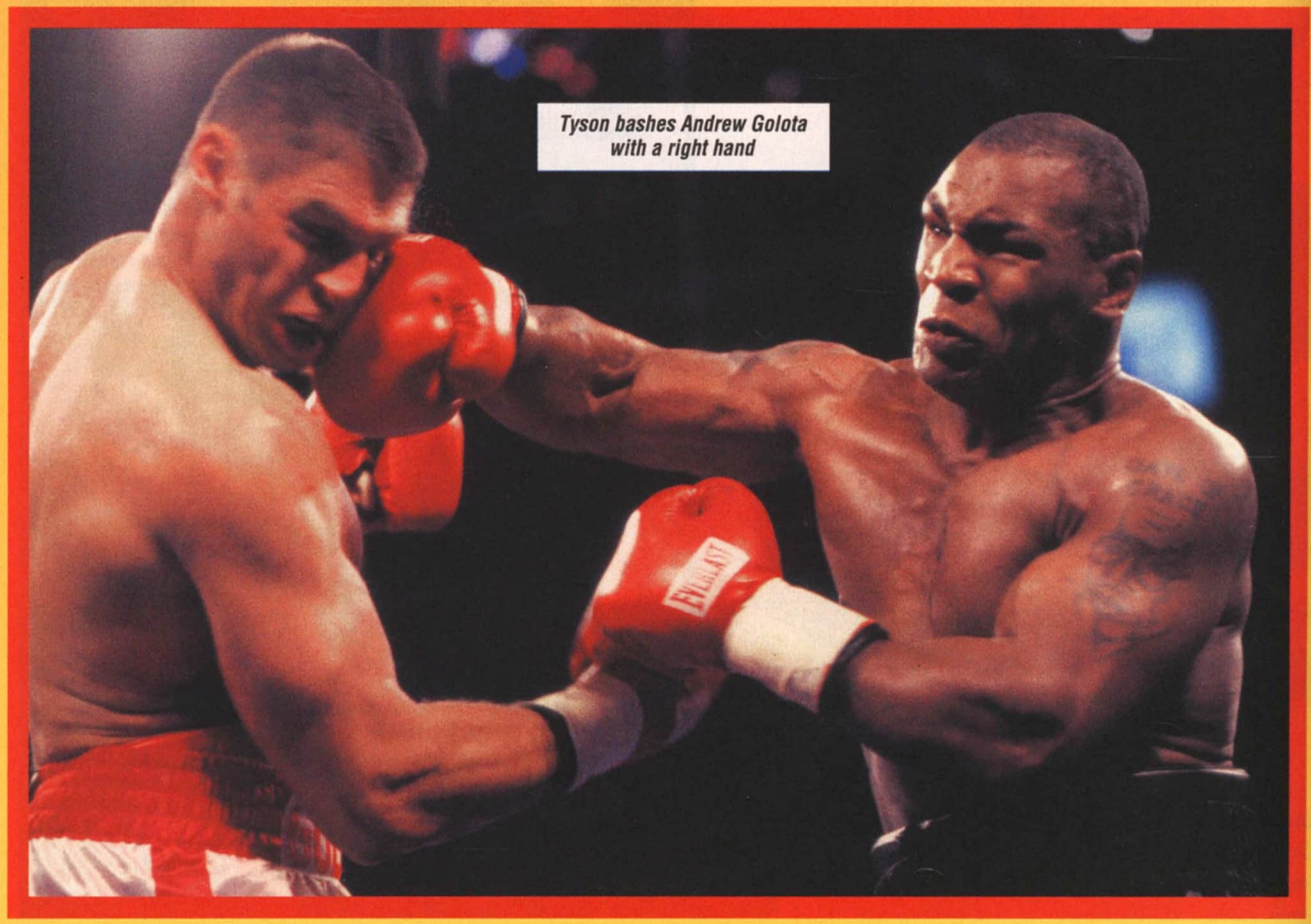
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In retrospect, it doesn't seem that unusual that Liston, older, undertrained, and short-tempered, couldn't catch Muhammad Ali early in their title fight in 1964 in Miami Beach. That he couldn't get any good work done during the rounds in which Ali was more or less blinded shows the degree to which Ali outclassed him.

16 MIKE TYSON

Record: 50-4 (44)
with two no-contests

Years Fought: 1985-Present

Titles Held: WBC Heavyweight 1986-'90, 1996; WBA Heavyweight 1987-'90, 1996; IBF Heavyweight 1987-'90



Tyson bashes Andrew Golota with a right hand

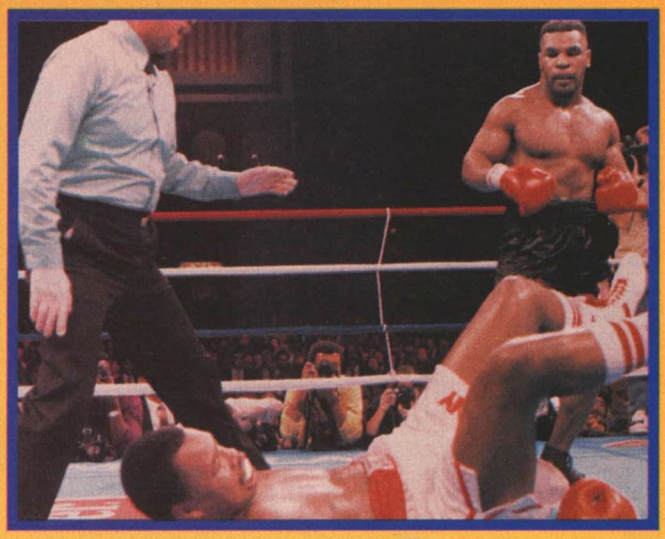
Best Punch: Tyson has stopped guys with every punch in the book, but it was with the right uppercut that he tried, in his words, to drive Jesse Ferguson's nose into his brain. It was the right uppercut that nearly decapitated poor Marvis Frazier, and it was the right uppercut that very nearly saved Tyson against Buster Douglas in Tokyo.

Greatest Knockout: It never was as good again for Tyson as it was in June 1988 when he demolished Michael Spinks in less than a round in Atlantic City. A stellar light heavyweight champion, Spinks was undefeated and had never been floored as a pro. They met to unify the title, and after Tyson landed an uppercut, it was as good as over. Spinks never fought again.

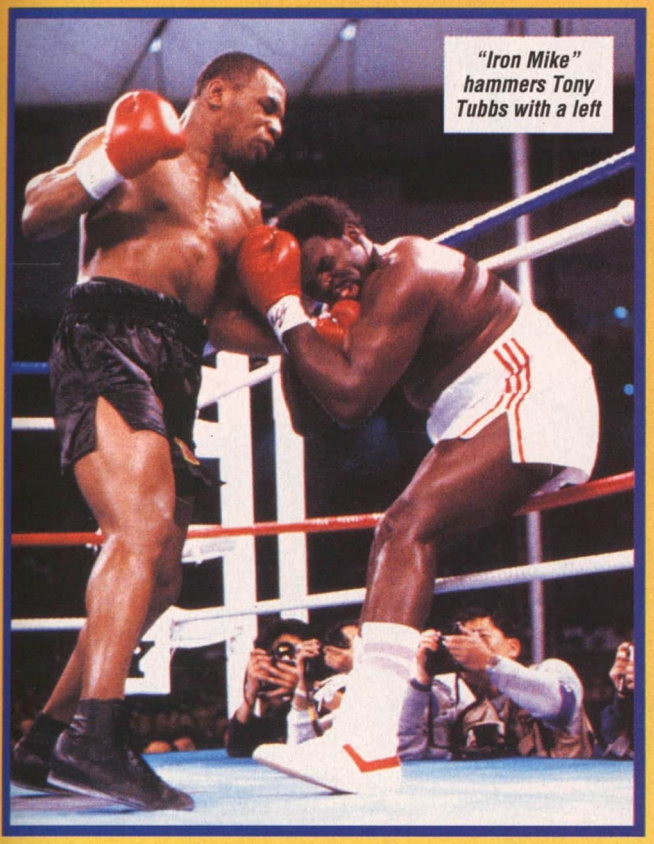
Statistical Analysis: Tyson is undefeated in non-title fights, and 34 of those 38 victories are by kayo—an imposing knockout rate of 89 percent. By contrast, his record in title fights is 12-4 with 10 wins by kayo—a decidedly less impressive rate of 63 percent.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: James "Quick" Tillis was well

Tyson overwhelms Trevor Berbick for the title



Larry Holmes suffers his only career kayo loss



Razor Ruddock reels from a right

beyond his best years when he met Tyson in New York in May 1986. Using skills that were still reasonably slick, an experienced jab, and a sound chin, he did enough to frustrate and extend Tyson for the first time in Tyson's career, though he lost a unanimous 10-round decision.

Beyond The Punch: Whether Tyson was overrated early in his career will be forever debated, but this much is certain: In his prime, he displayed an uncanny mixture of hand speed, one-punch power, and defensive acuity. Partying got in the way a lot, and still does, but few heavyweight champions were more physically gifted.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Those who maintain that Tyson's intimidating physical presence is as responsible for his high kayo percentage as is his punching ability present Evander Holyfield as Exhibit A. Never one to capitulate to bullies, Holyfield stood up to Tyson's best bombs and threats and stopped him in 11 rounds in 1996. He apparently was on his way to a similar win the following year when Tyson was disqualified for biting.

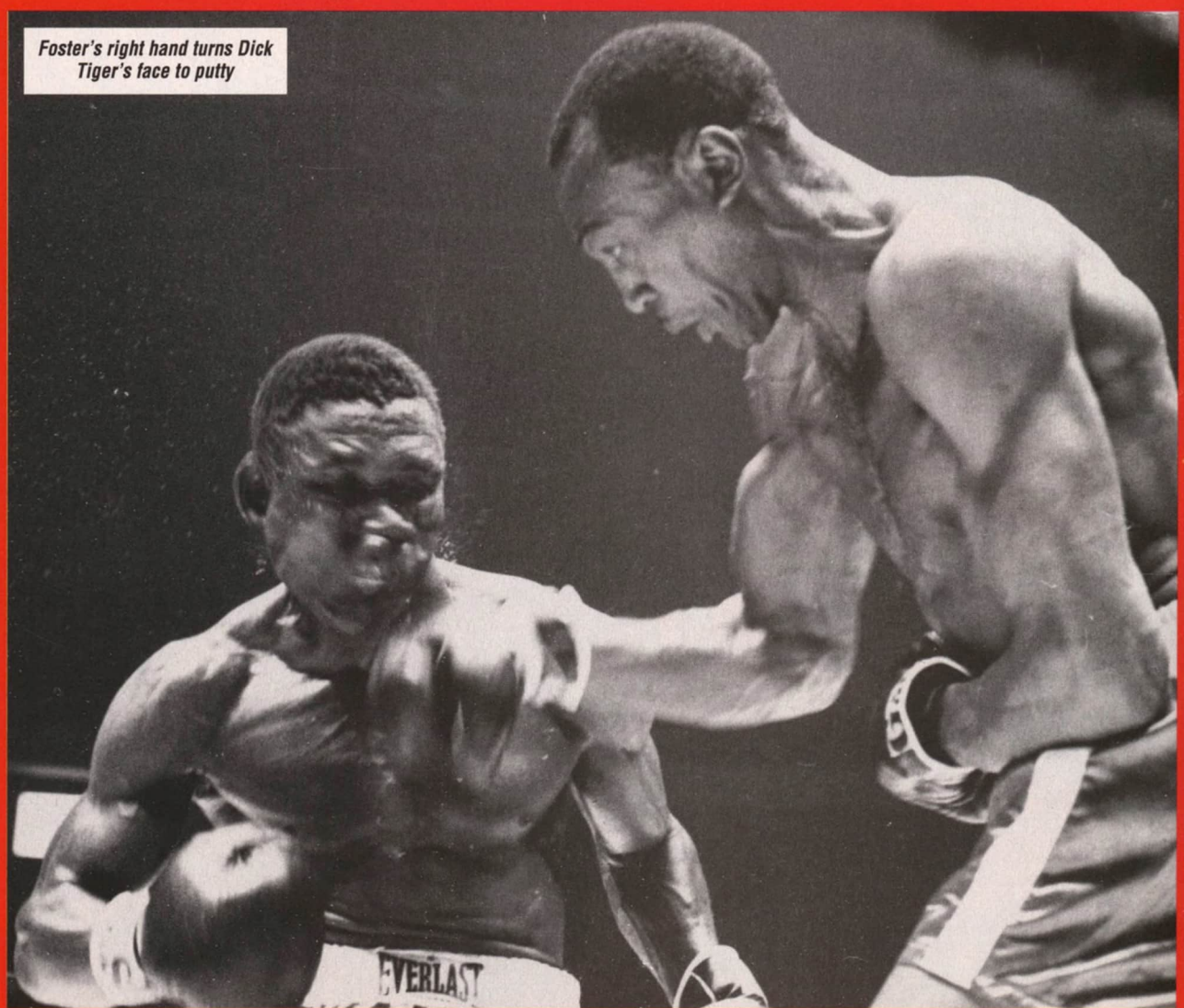
FEBRUARY 25, 1989, LAS VEGAS, NEVADA: In the first of his two bouts with popular British fighter Frank Bruno, undisputed heavyweight champion Tyson lands a vicious left hook to the head. "Iron Mike" would stop Bruno in the fifth round for his 32nd kayo in 36 pro fights.

17 BOB FOSTER

Record: 56-8-1 (46)

Years Fought: 1961-'78

Titles Held: World Light Heavyweight 1968-'74

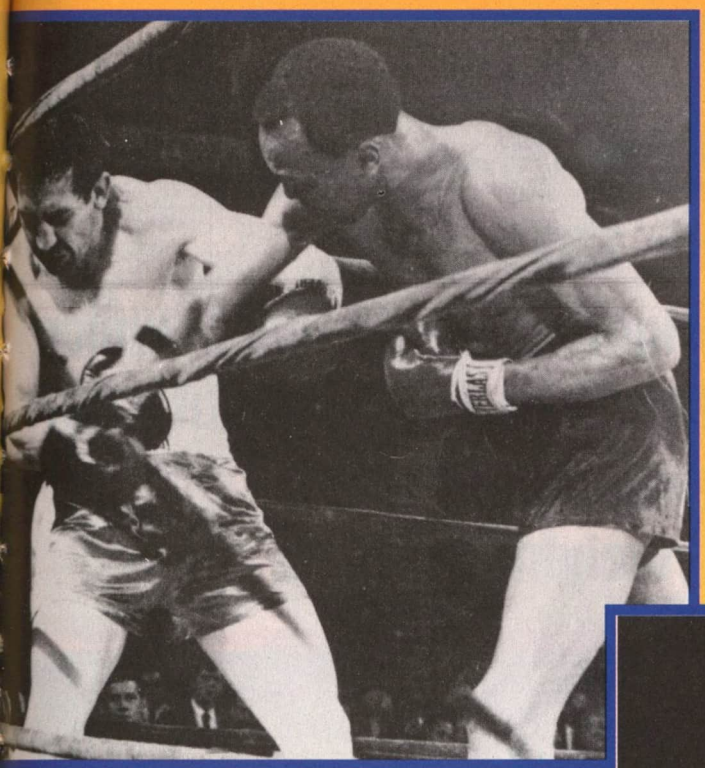


Foster's right hand turns Dick Tiger's face to putty

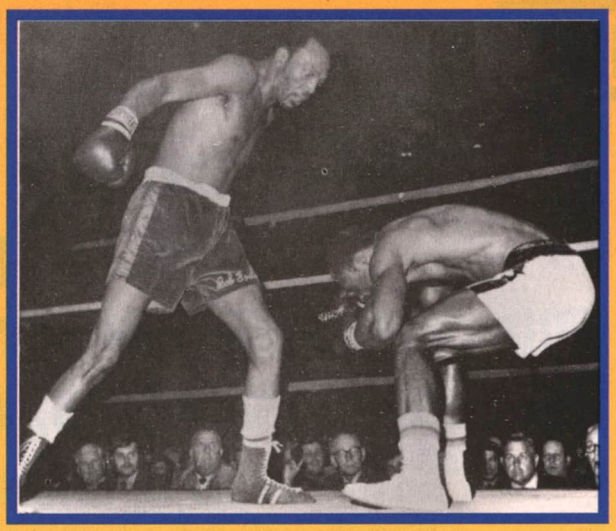
Best Punch: You'd think a tall, rangy guy like Foster would be married to the jab and the right hand, and to an extent Foster was. But the punch he put guys to sleep with was the left hook—thrown short and hard like a guy a foot shorter and stubbier is supposed to throw it. You'll get no argument if you call it the single hardest punch in the history of the light heavyweight division.

Greatest Knockout: History primarily recalls three great left hooks: the one Joe Frazier used to deck Muhammad Ali, the one Ray Robinson used to stop Gene Fullmer, and the cannon blast Foster used to blow away iron-chinned Dick Tiger in May 1968 to win the title. It was one of only two kayo losses in Tiger's 81-bout Hall of Fame career, and it was a beauty.

Statistical Analysis: Of Foster's eight career losses, seven came against heavyweights. (The exception was a 1978 loss to Mustapha Wassaja in Foster's next-to-last fight.) Take out the

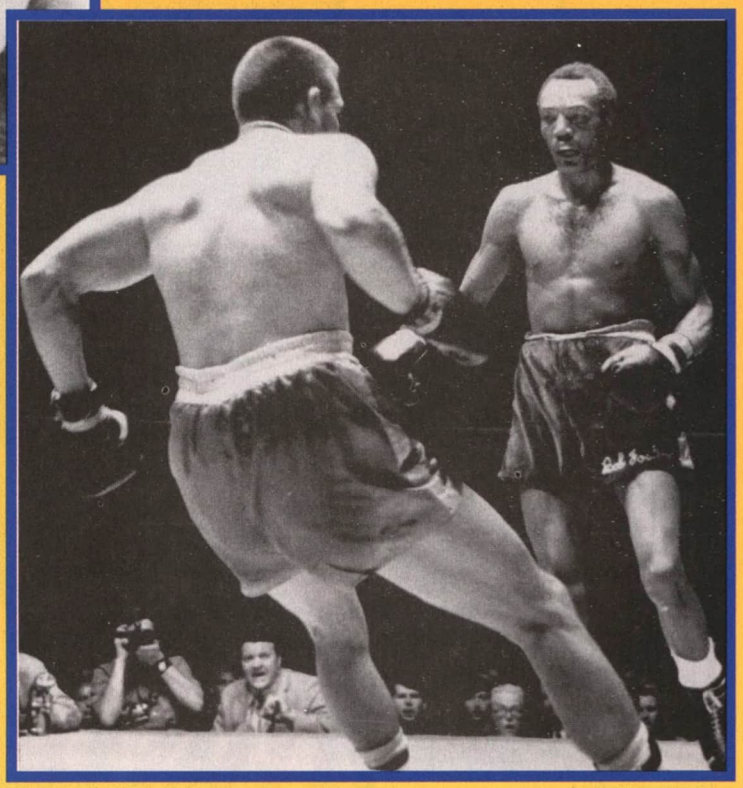


The champ takes out Andy Kendall in four



Challenger Hal Carroll is headed for the canvas

Foster is directed to a neutral corner after flooring Vicente Rondon



Foster knocks out Mark Tessman in the 10th

heavyweight fights, and Foster's career kayo rate goes way up. Foster was stopped in five of the seven heavyweight losses, and on average made it into the fifth round before eating canvas. Interestingly, Foster's 56 career wins, on average, lasted exactly five rounds.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Foster was past his prime when he twice defended against South African Pierre Fourie in 1973, but it remains that in 30 rounds, he never really hurt the challenger. He controlled both clinch-filled bouts with his long and still effective left jab but could never land the clean powerpunches that were his trademark.

Beyond The Punch: Foster's greatest strength was his punch, but he was also a reasonable boxer; he didn't go in there wildly looking for a kayo. He could set up a guy all night, jab him, step around him, set him up again, jab him, then land the kayo blow. He was far less primitive than his kayo percentage and reputation imply.

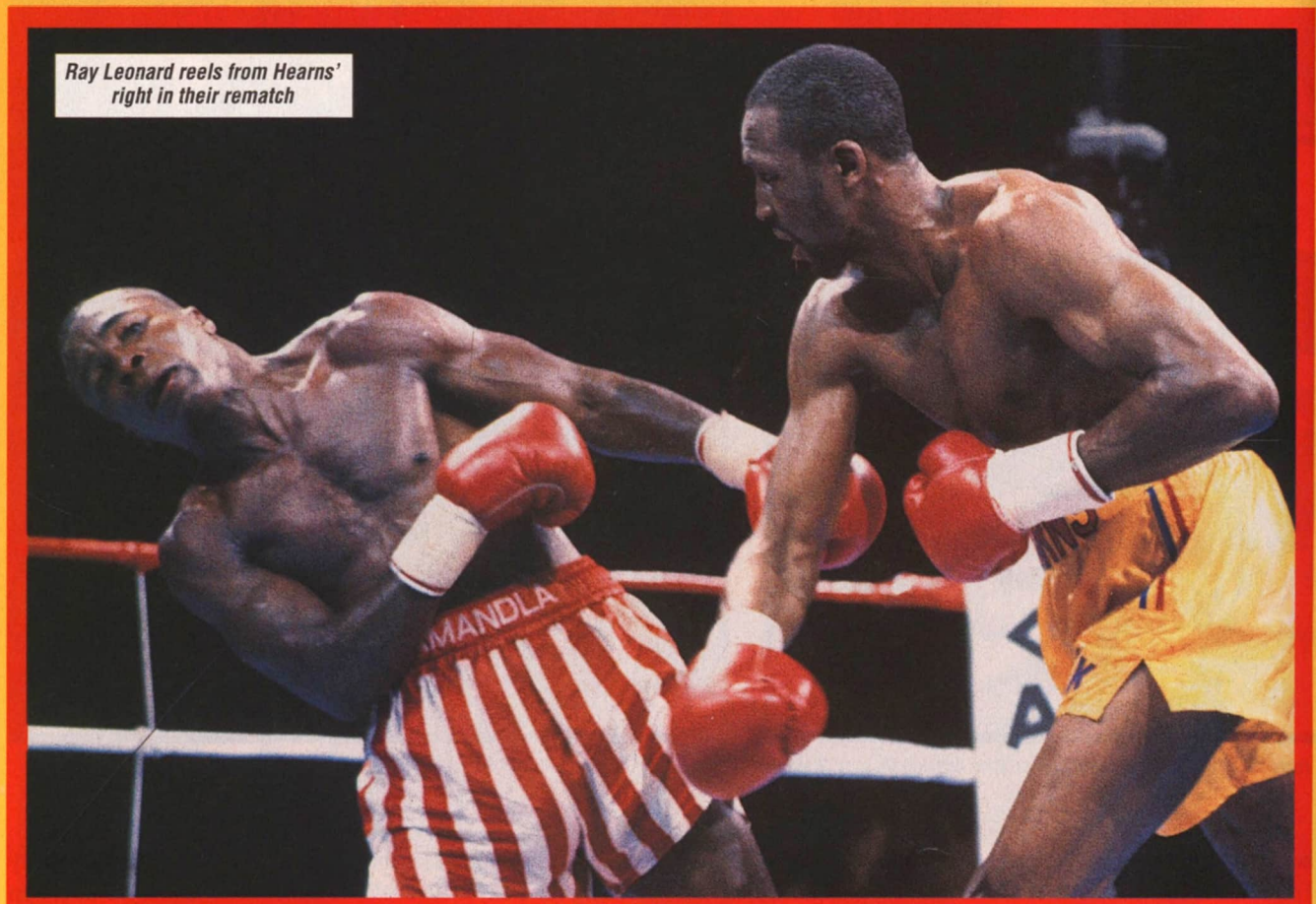
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: The punch wasn't enough for Foster just about every time he fought a good heavyweight, but he was especially outgunned by undefeated heavyweight champion Joe Frazier in 1970. Foster did all right in the first round and even bounced a hard right off of Frazier's jaw. But once Frazier got the hook cranking it was no contest, and Foster was gone in two.

18 THOMAS HEARNS

Record: 59-5-1 (46)

Years Fought: 1977-2000

Titles Held: WBA Welterweight 1980-'81; WBC Junior Middleweight 1982-'86; WBC Light Heavyweight 1987; WBC Middleweight 1987-'88; WBA Light Heavyweight 1991-'92

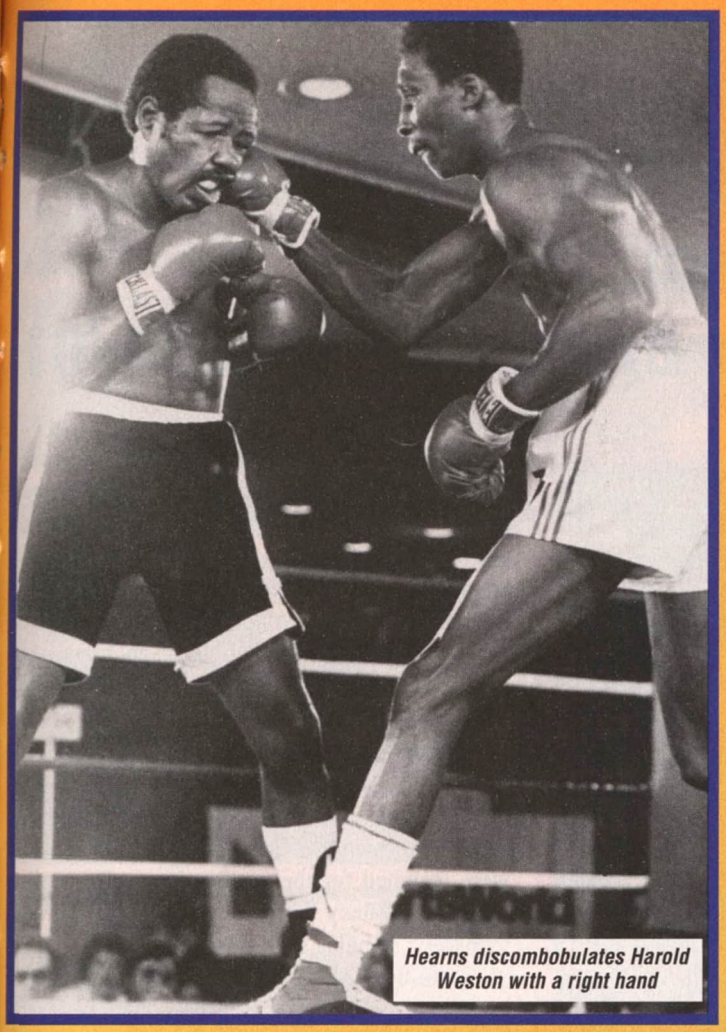


Ray Leonard reels from Hearns' right in their rematch

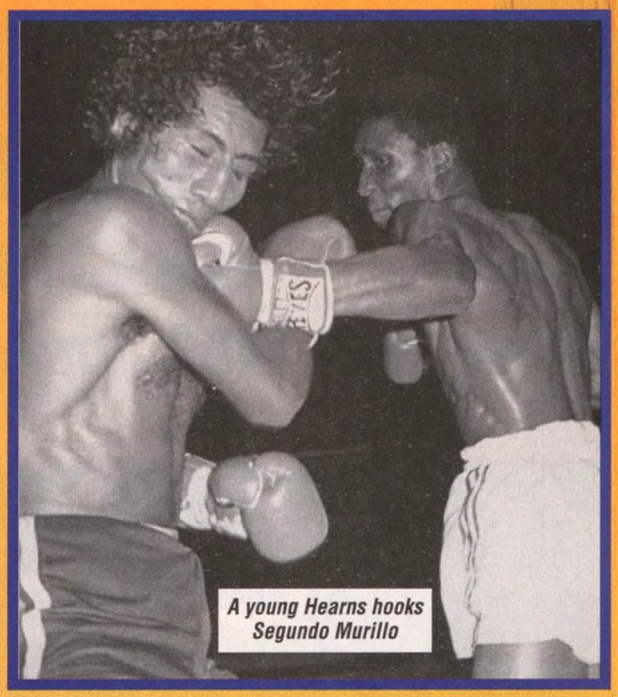
Best Punch: Throughout the 1980s, Hearns' right cross was one of the most feared blows in the business. Hearns turned the right hand over like few guys at any weight, and when it landed cleanly it was a thing of beauty. He had the perfect means to set it up—a long, fast, hard jab—and then the right hand would come over the top. It was gorgeous.

Greatest Knockout: Outside of his embarrassing rematch with Ray Leonard, Roberto Duran had never been stopped before he faced Hearns in 1984 in Las Vegas. And in his previous fight, he had pushed middleweight champ Marvin Hagler for 15 hard rounds. But Hearns' right hands sent Duran down twice in the first round, and another in the second put him on his face and out.

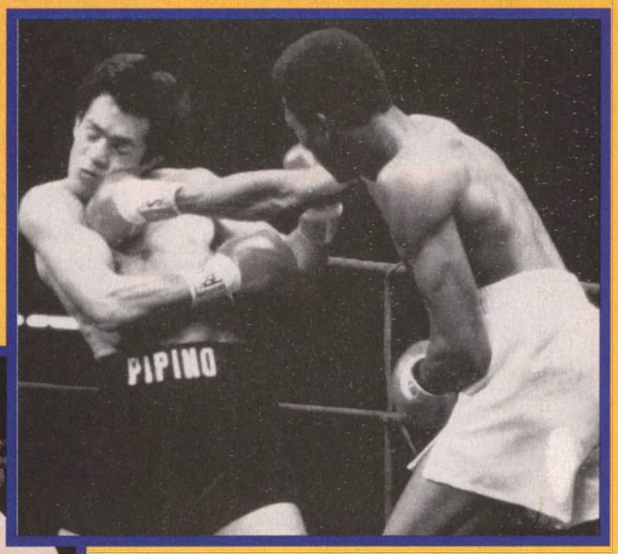
Statistical Analysis: The heavier Hearns got, the more his kayo rate dipped. He won by knockout in 30 of his first 33 fights (mostly at welterweight), a rate of 90 percent. In his next eight fights—all at or around the junior middleweight limit—he scored four knockouts (50 percent), and in five subsequent fights



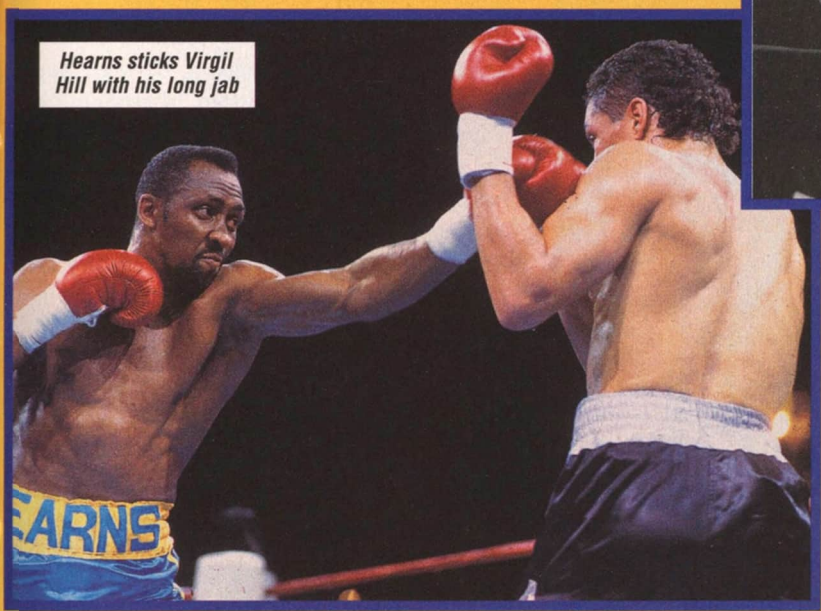
Hearns discombobulates Harold Weston with a right hand



A young Hearns hooks Segundo Murillo



"The Hit Man" ruins Pipino Cuevas with a right



Hearns sticks Virgil Hill with his long jab

as a middleweight, he scored two knockouts (40 percent). Quality of opposition factors into some of that, but clearly he wasn't as consistent a powerpuncher after he left 147.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Hearns was close to stopping Iran Barkley in their 1988 middleweight title fight when Barkley's desperation right hand turned Hearns to jelly in the third round. In the rematch four years later for the WBA light heavyweight title, Hearns couldn't keep Barkley off of him and was pounded silly en route to a 12-round decision loss.

Beyond The Punch: As he showed in his first fight with Ray Leonard and also against Wilfred Benitez, Hearns was no one-trick pony; he was a superb boxer. He could motor around the ring for great stretches and dominate guys just with the jab. When in that mode, he was almost untouchable. The problem was if you could get to his chin, you could hurt him.

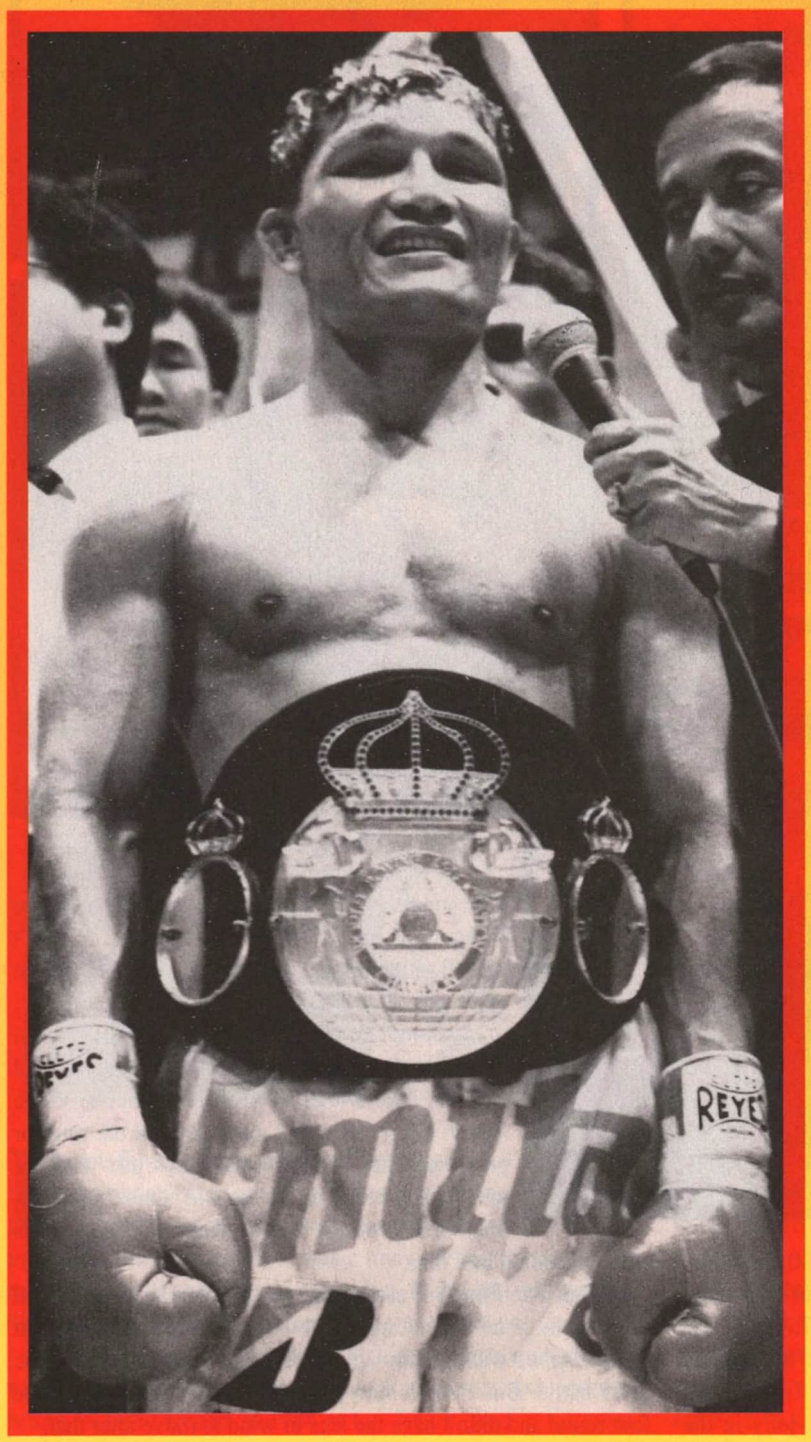
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: It would have been good for Hearns if he'd been able to box after Marvelous Marvin Hagler started walking through his best right crosses in their epic 1985 battle. But Hearns blew his load in that wildly exquisite first round and didn't have the legs or wind to move after that.

19 KHAOSAI GALAXY

Record: 49-1 (43)

Years Fought: 1980-'91

Titles Held: WBA Junior Bantamweight 1984-'91



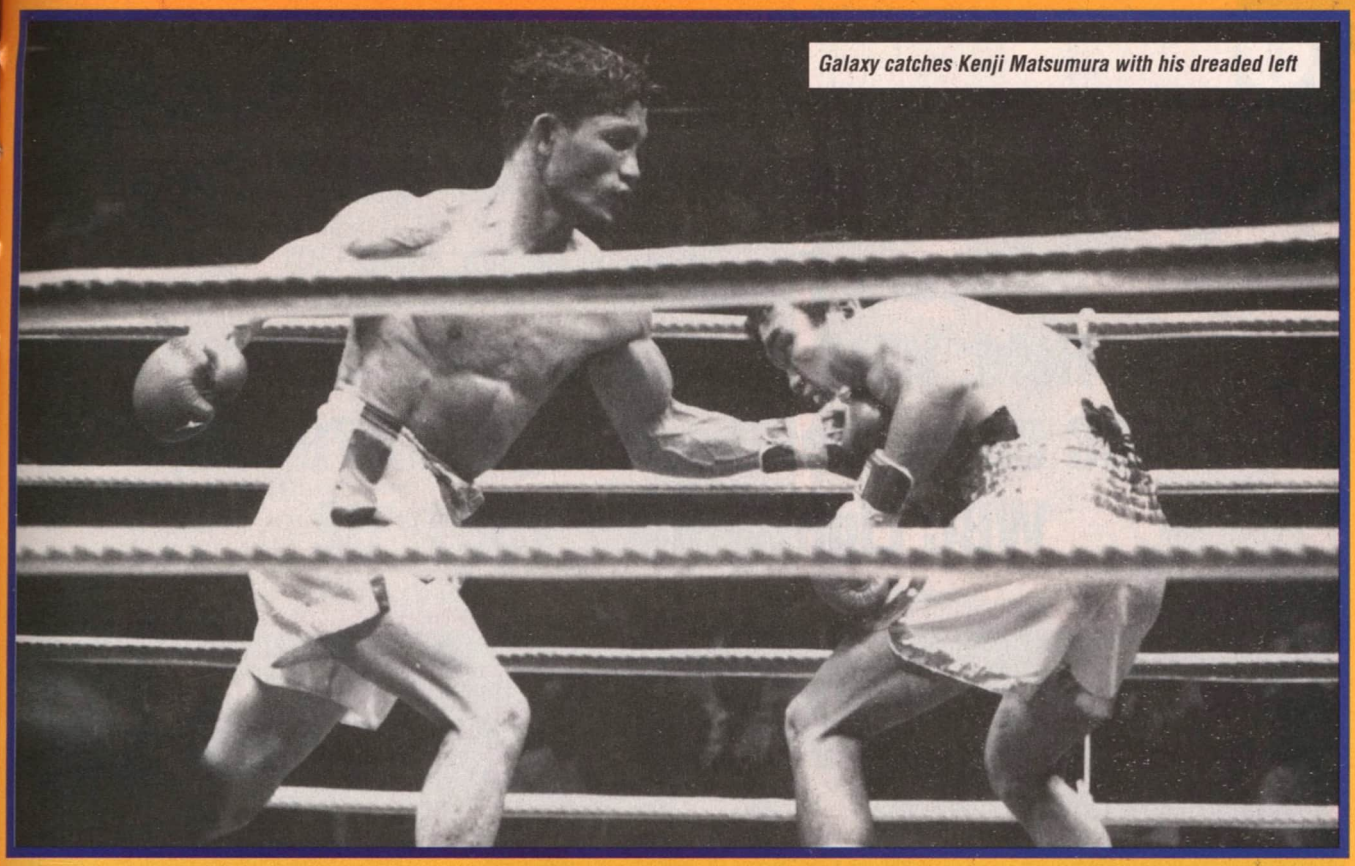
Best Punch: The southpaw Galaxy's overhand left was a club of a blow that helped send 19 title challengers home empty-handed, 16 with a concussion. It didn't matter to him if he had to come from behind to land it, or even off the canvas. He never stopped winging it and it was why a lot of guys thought of him as an Asian, 115-pound Mike Tyson. They even called him "The Thai Tyson." It fit.

Greatest Knockout: Previous WBA titlist Jiro Watanabe wanted no part of Galaxy and was stripped by the WBA for failing to defend against him. Top contenders Galaxy and Eusebio Espinal were matched for the vacant title in November 1984, and Galaxy destroyed him, taking the title with a commanding sixth-round stoppage.

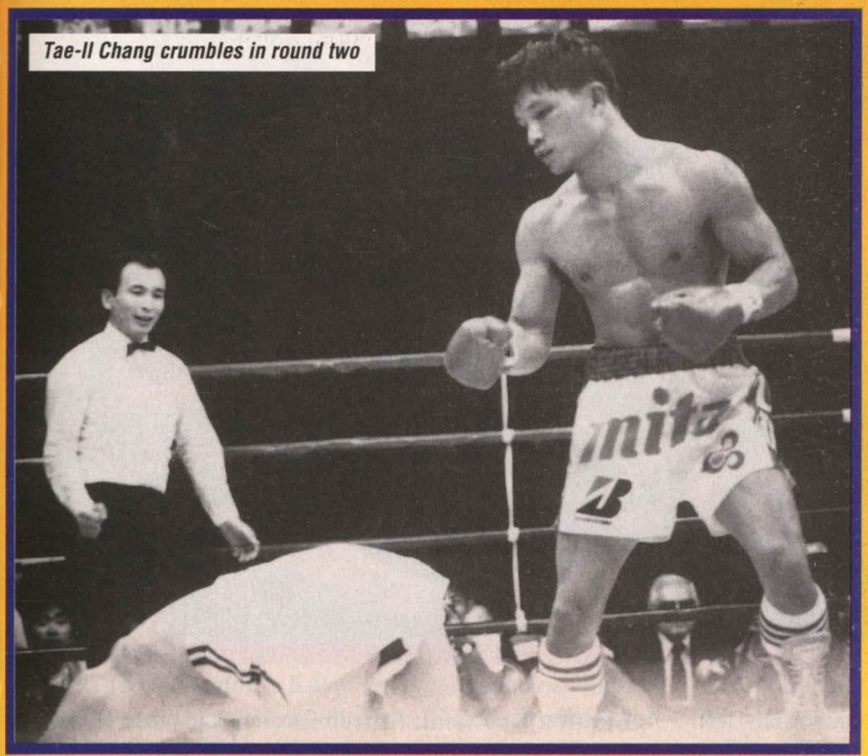
Statistical Analysis: Junior bantamweights aren't supposed to be big punchers, but take another look at Galaxy's record. The guy ended his career with a stunning 86 percent kayo rate. He lost only once—and avenged it. Between August '81 and June '83 he stopped 14 straight guys. Those are the numbers of a big hitter. Also: Galaxy's 19 defenses and seven-year reign are records for the junior bantamweight division. No one comes close.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In January 1988, right in the middle of Galaxy's reign, Kongthora

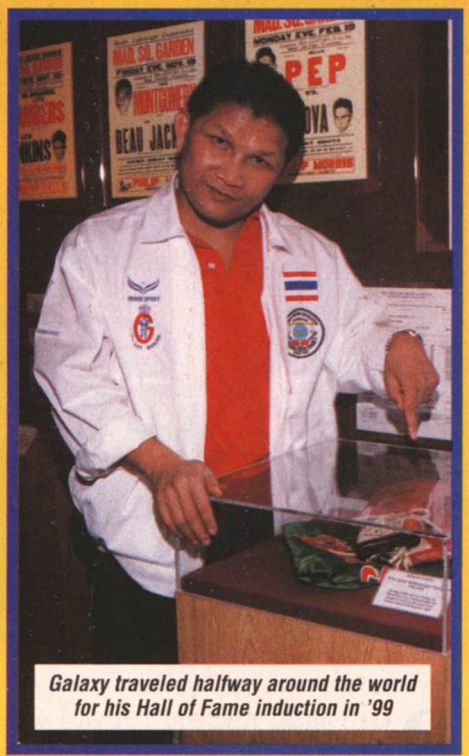
Shunichi Nakajima can do little but cover up



Galaxy catches Kenji Matsumura with his dreaded left



Tae-Il Chang crumbles in round two



Galaxy traveled halfway around the world for his Hall of Fame induction in '99

Payakarun took a prime Galaxy the full 12 rounds in Bangkok, Thailand, becoming the first of only three challengers to do so.

Beyond The Punch: Galaxy was a determined, courageous little brawler who was out to hit you with the left. That was it. He applied relentless pressure and strength and left the rest up to the power in his fists. As a former Thai kickboxer who stumbled into regular boxing almost by accident, there wasn't a lot of great stuff going on mechanically. There wasn't a lot of defense going on. It was all grit, pressure, and punch. It worked for him.

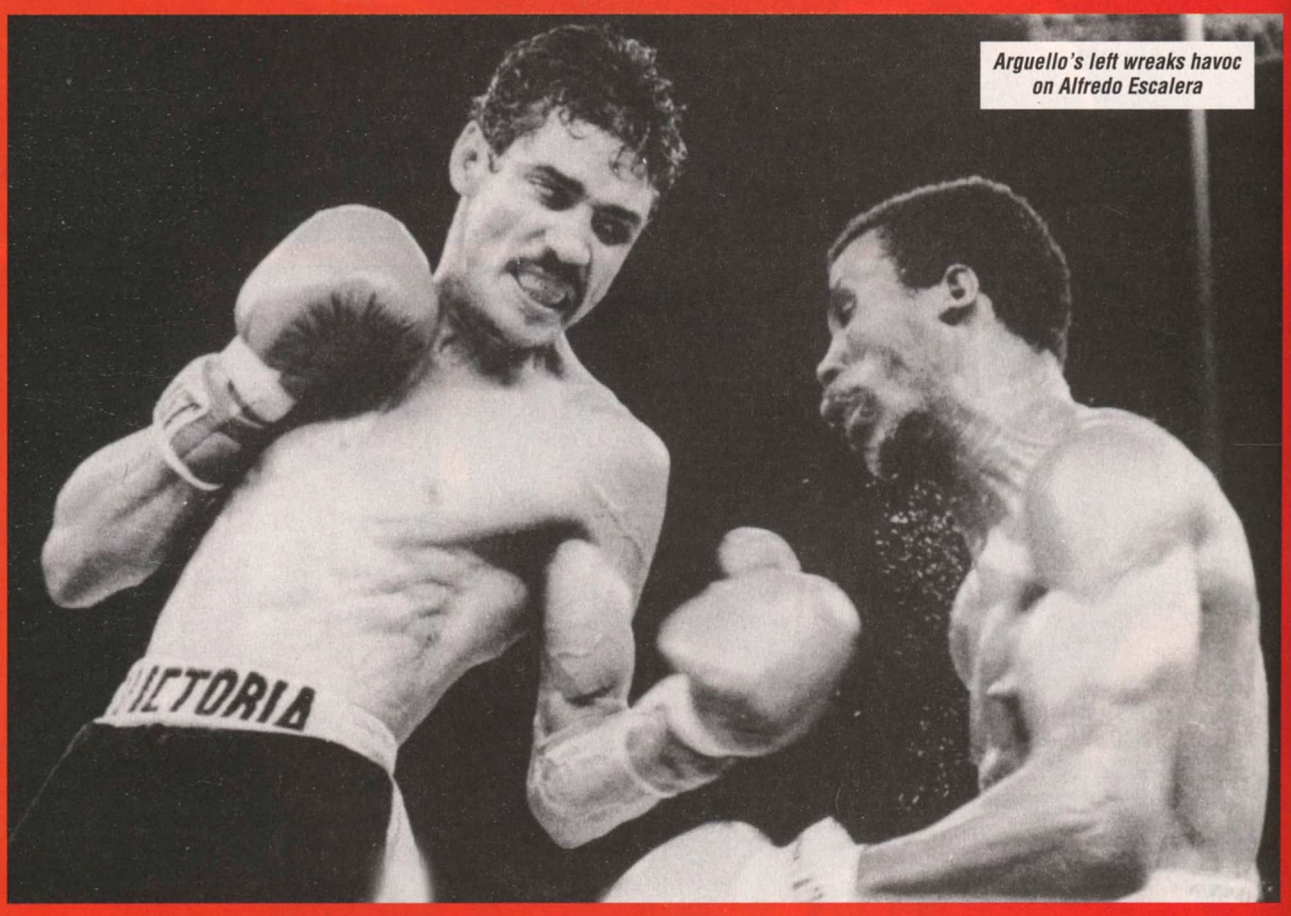
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Galaxy lost only once as a pro—to Sakda Saksuree, who won a 10-round decision over Galaxy in July 1981 in Thailand. It was Galaxy's sixth pro fight, and he avenged the loss a mere two months later with a resounding sixth-round knockout.

20 ALEXIS ARGUELLO

Record: 80-8 (64)

Years Fought: 1968-'95

Titles Held: WBA Featherweight 1974-'77; WBC Super Featherweight 1978-'80; WBC Lightweight 1981-'82

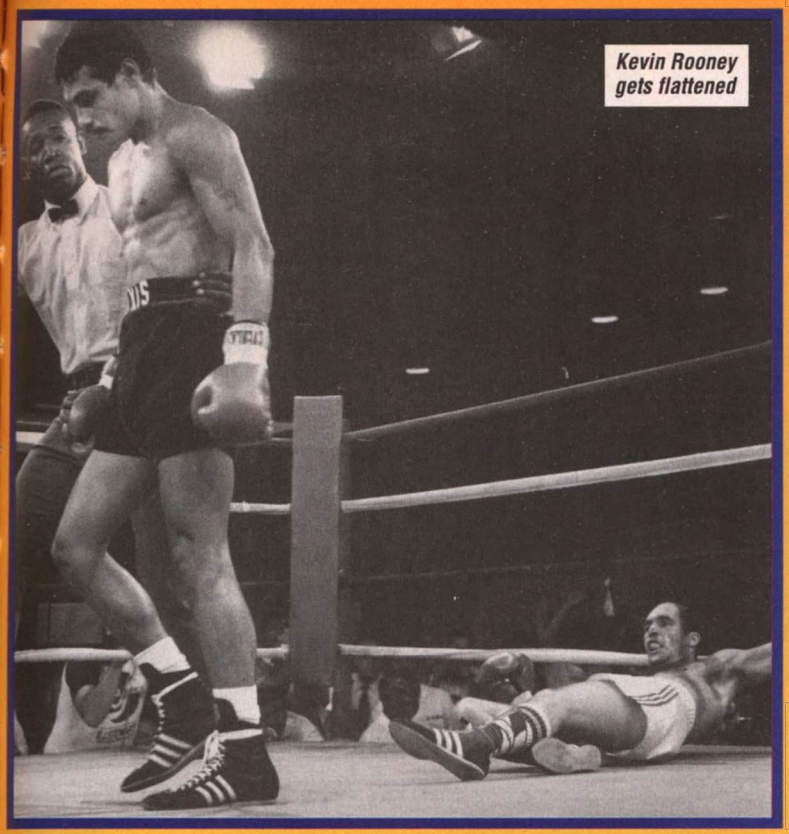


Arguello's left wreaks havoc on Alfredo Escalera

Best Punch: Arguello's arsenal was stocked: His left hook was at once sharp and heavy, his uppercut to the pit of the belly wind-robbing and, by design, usually one of the last blows of the fight. But more often than anything, the end came from the right cross. Many times it exploded without warning, swift and straight, on impact rendering its target spastic, incoherent. Everyone knew that to beat Arguello, you had to avoid his punches. To survive him, you had to avoid the right hand.

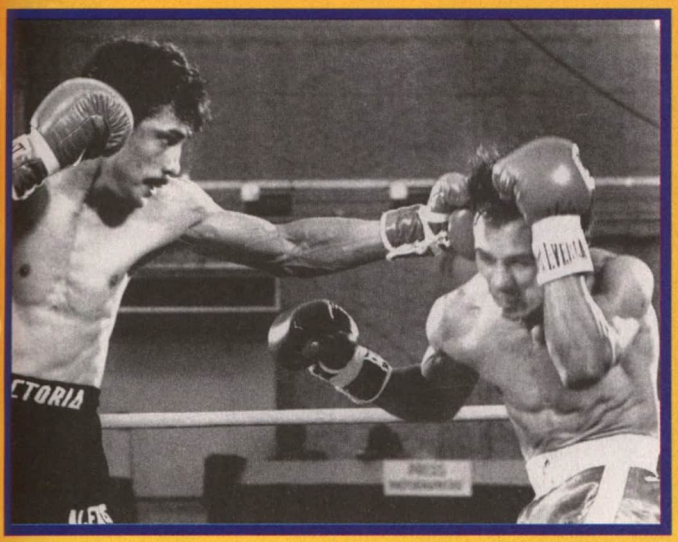
Greatest Knockout: Alfredo Escalera had made 10 defenses of the WBC super featherweight title before Arguello stopped him in 13 savage rounds in January 1978. In the rematch the following February, Arguello cut Escalera over both eyes, knocked him down in the fourth and fifth rounds, and stopped him, in the 13th again, with a titanic left hook. It probably was the best Arguello anyone would ever see. He was something.

Statistical Analysis: Arguello was 19-3 (17) in title fights,



Kevin Rooney gets flattened

Arguello gets honored for winning his third title



Arturo Leon takes a crunching hook from Arguello

Ray Mancini can't get past Arguello's left

for a gaudy 77 percent kayo rate. Interestingly, his non-title career kayo rate is a fair bit lower, at 68 percent.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Pesky, fleet-footed Vilomar Fernandez twice gave Arguello fits. He decisioned "The Explosive Thin Man" over 10 rounds in a 1978 non-title bout at Madison Square Garden, when Arguello was the WBC 130-pound king. Arguello gained a measure of revenge five years later in Texas, but even then he had to settle for a 10-round decision win.

Beyond The Punch: Technically, Arguello was a near flawless offensive fighter; the cross and jab were always thrown straight and from the shoulder, the hook was short and precise. He was a superb bodypuncher and was always cool. Everything was by the book. On the downside, he was slow of both hand and foot and didn't spend much time on defense. And especially later in his career, he was prone to cuts and swelling.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: No matter how many right hands he landed, Arguello just could not get past Aaron Pryor. He scored enough in both of their fights to knock out several lesser men, but Pryor's speed, strength, mobility, and ability to take the naturally smaller Arguello's punch were too much for him. Arguello was beaten unconscious in their great struggle in 1982, and in the rematch a year later, he essentially capitulated after taking a dreadful beating.

21 CARLOS ZARATE

Record: 61-4 (58)

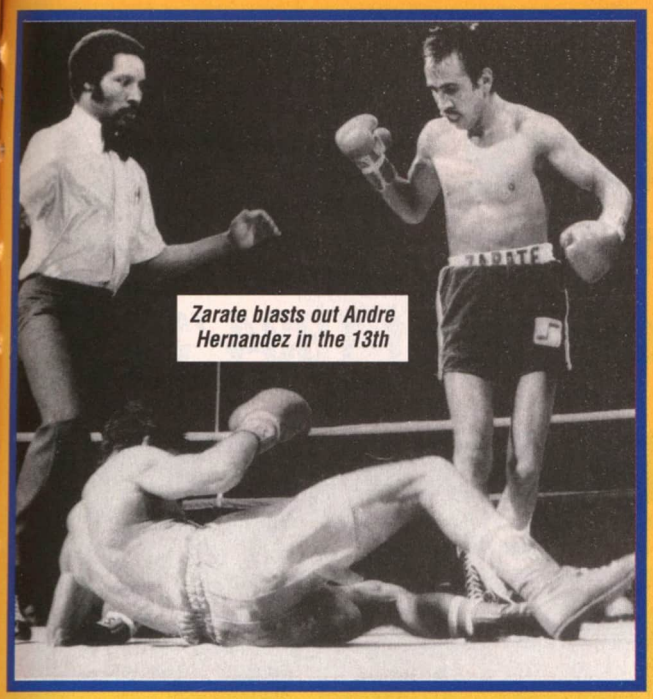
Years Fought: 1970-'88

Titles Held: WBC Bantamweight 1976-'79

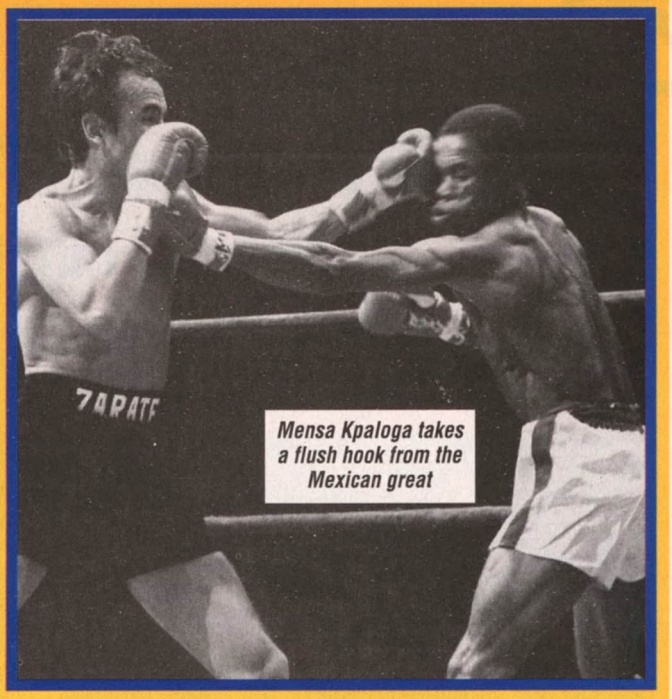
Paul Ferreri soaks up Zarate's long right cross

Best Punch: If you watched just a highlight reel of Zarate's career knockouts, you'd think his best punch was his long, crackling right cross, or maybe the short, potent left hook he threw inside. After all, those usually were the last punches of the fight. But they wouldn't have been what they were without the stabbing left uppercut to the liver that set them up. It accounted for as many knockouts as did the right and the hook, even if it was harder to see.

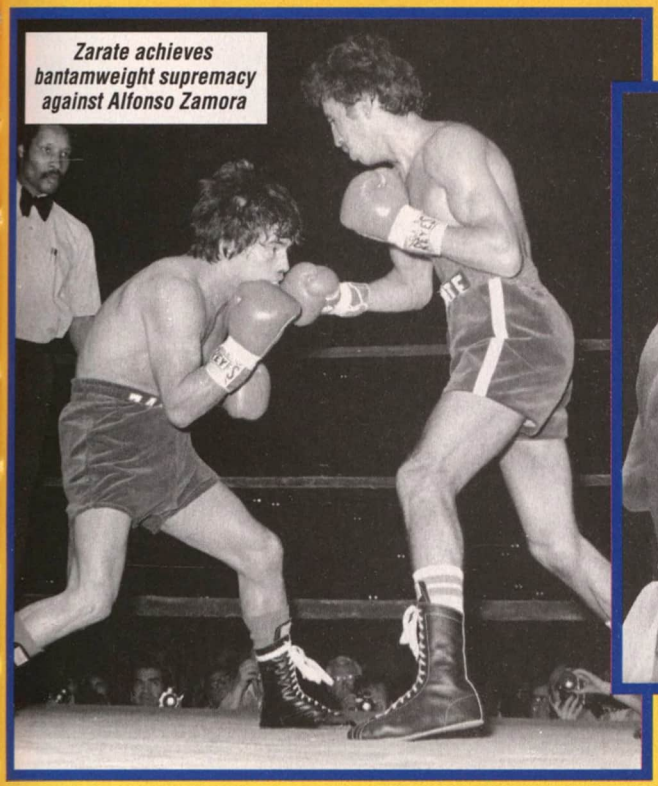
Greatest Knockout: Zarate was 40-0 (39) when he met fellow powerpuncher Alfonso Zamora in California in April 1977. Zamora was 29-0 (29), and it may have been the most eagerly anticipated bantamweight fight ever. Although no title was at stake, it was a legitimate superfight. After losing the first round and asserting his better skills in the second, Zarate hurt and floored Zamora late in the third and scored two more knockdowns in the fourth to win by stirring fourth-round kayo.



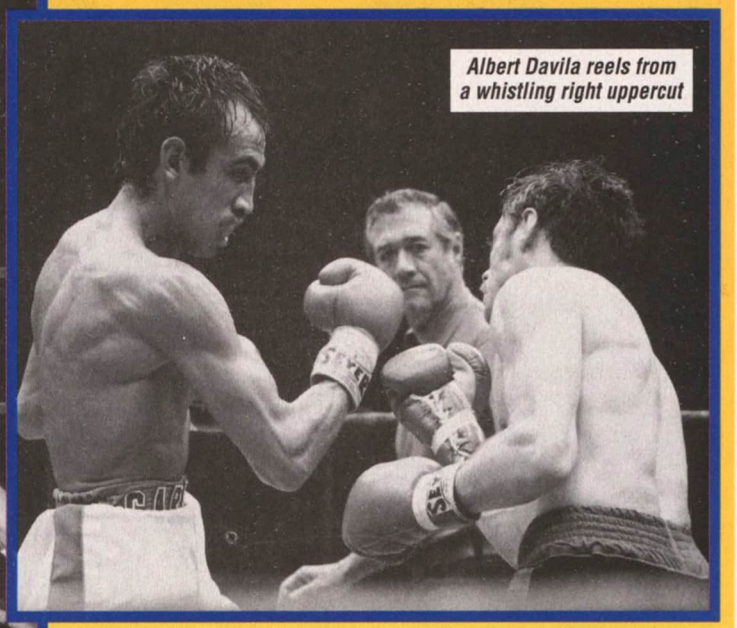
Zarate blasts out Andre Hernandez in the 13th



Mensa Kpaloga takes a flush hook from the Mexican great



Zarate achieves bantamweight supremacy against Alfonso Zamora



Albert Davila reels from a whistling right uppercut

Statistical Analysis: If Zarate had remained retired after his surprising 1979 decision loss to Lupe Pintor, his final record would have been 49-2 (48), a mind-boggling kayo rate of 94 percent. Following his comeback in 1986 and subsequent losses to Jeff Fenech and Daniel Zaragoza, it ended up a mere 89 percent.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Zarate floored challenger and stablemate Pintor in the fourth round of their title fight in Nevada in June 1979, but couldn't keep him down. He paid for it. In one of the most controversial decisions of the decade, Pintor took the title by split decision. Zarate was so disgusted he quit on the spot and didn't fight again for seven years.

Beyond The Punch: Zarate was rangy and aggressive and he could take you out from distance or from in close. He was a very good in-fighter for a guy with his build, and once he got a guy hurt it usually was over.

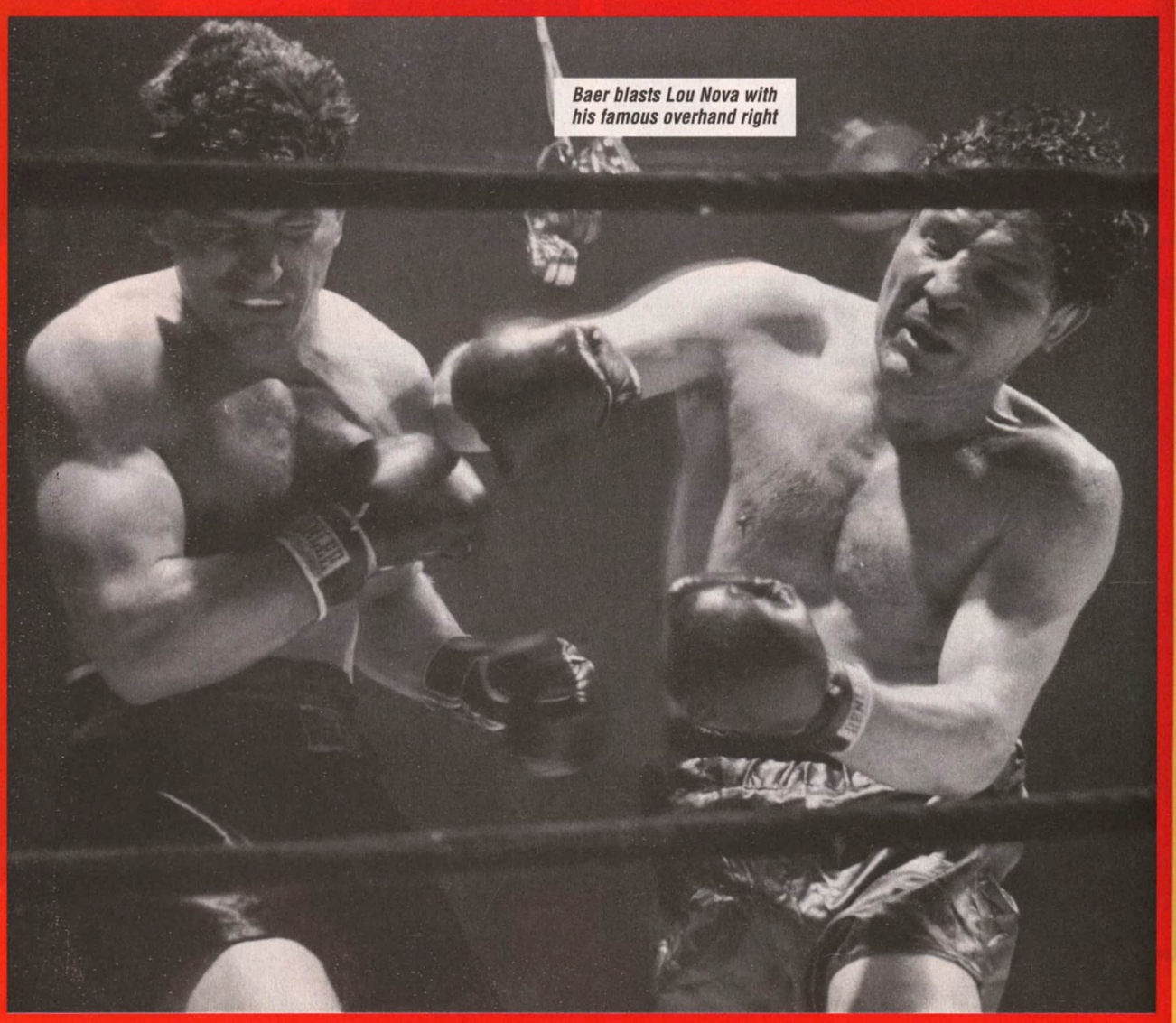
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Zarate was still at the top of his game in October 1978 when he rose in weight to challenge fellow superstar Wilfredo Gomez for the super featherweight title. But Gomez simply overpowered Zarate, dropping him three times in the fourth and again in the fifth before it was stopped.

22 MAX BAER

Record: 70-12 (52)

Years Fought: 1929-'41

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1934-'35

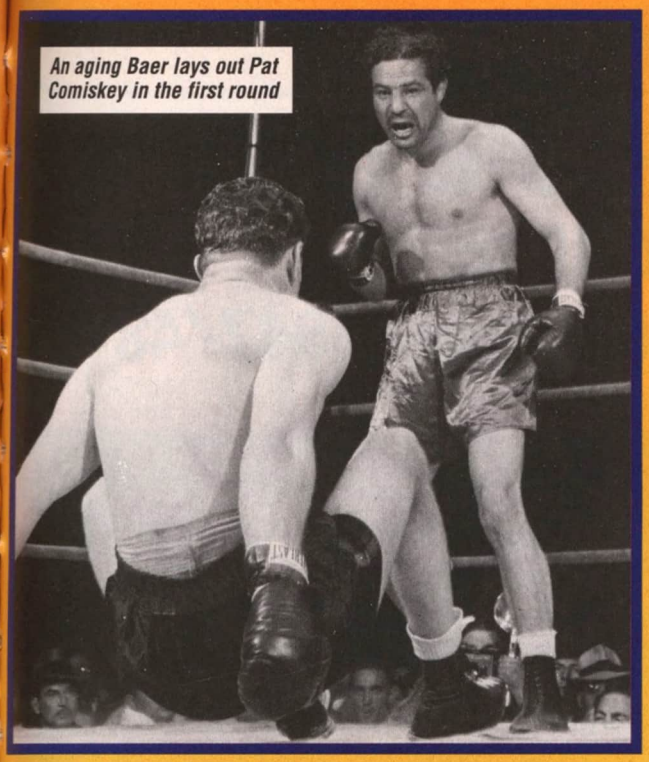


Baer blasts Lou Nova with his famous overhand right

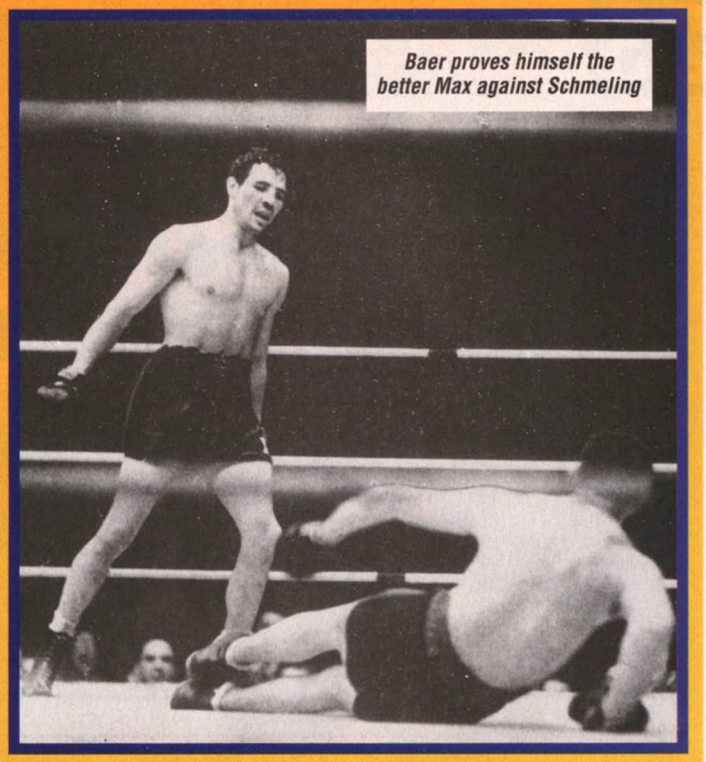
Best Punch: Until Joe Louis arrived on the scene in 1934, Baer's overhand right probably was the hardest punch in the business. It never was as short or as accurate as was Louis'—Baer telegraphed the punch and threw it looping most of the time. But when it landed, 200-pound men dropped. And Baer winged it with abandon, forever chasing the kayo.

Greatest Knockout: Baer was at his physical peak in June 1933 when he took on former champion Max Schmeling, who still was three years away from his upset of Louis. Baer, who was bigger and stronger than Schmeling, roughed him up and, by the late rounds, was banging him all over the ring with overhand rights. Schmeling was out on his feet when the referee stopped it in the 10th round.

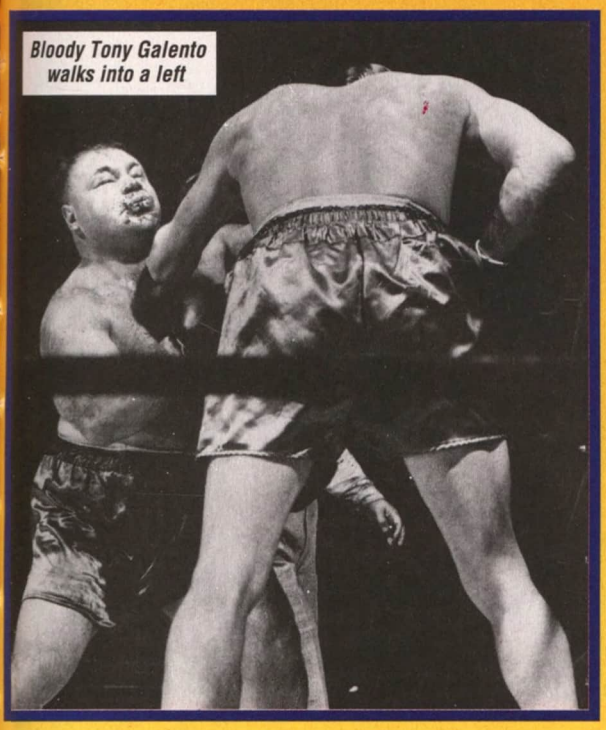
Statistical Analysis: After fighting just one time each in 1933 and '34, and just twice in '35—a loss to Jimmy Braddock for the title and a kayo loss to Louis—Baer fought 23 times in '36 (all in



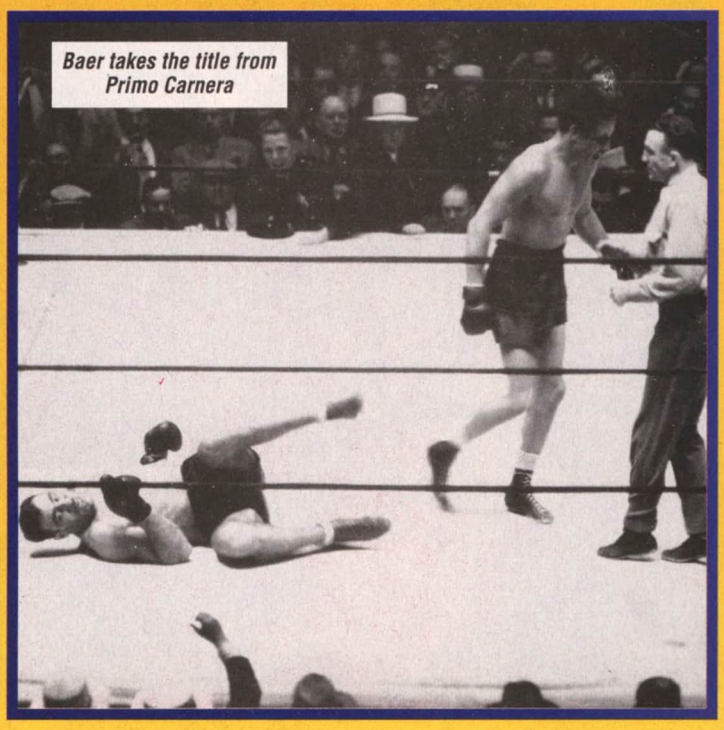
An aging Baer lays out Pat Comiskey in the first round



Baer proves himself the better Max against Schmeling



Bloody Tony Galento walks into a left



Baer takes the title from Primo Carnera

a four-month span, incredibly), going 23-0 and scoring 16 knockouts, albeit over second-rate competition. At one point he stopped eight foes in a row, which represented his longest-ever kayo streak.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Kingfish Levinsky, who lost to most of the best heavyweights and light heavyweights of the 1930s but beat everyone else, twice took Baer the full route: in January 1932 over 10 rounds in New York, and again six months later, when Baer won a 20-round decision in Nevada.

Beyond The Punch: When he was in the mood to hurt a guy, Baer was relentless, determined, and heavy-handed. But a lot of the time he was happy enough to swap punches, have some laughs, collect his purse, then hit the clubs—especially if he was in a little over his head or if he was injured. He just didn't care enough to be exceptional every time out.

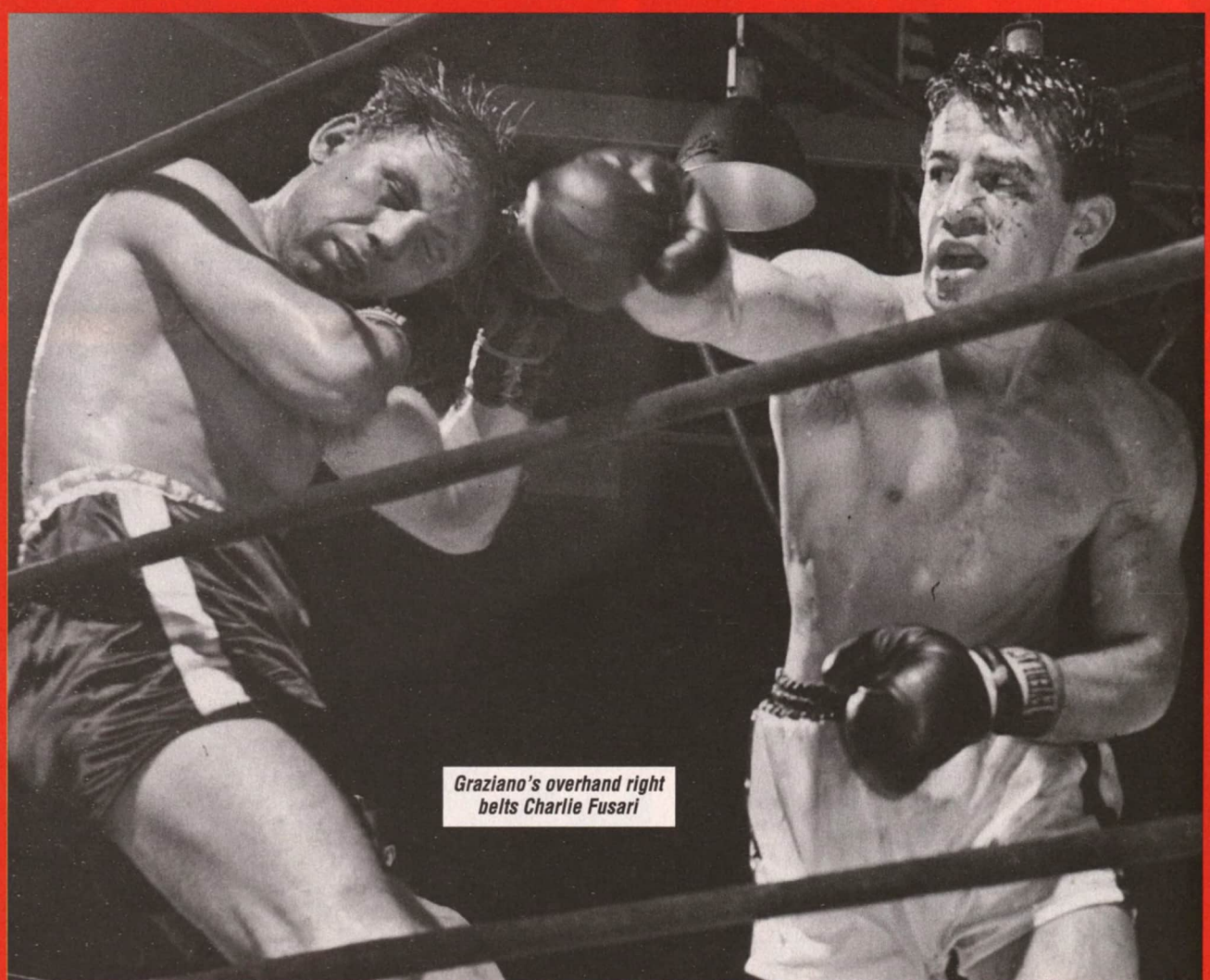
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Baer was completely outgunned and intimidated by Louis in their September 1935 showdown. He'd just lost the title to Braddock, and Louis was on his way up. After absorbing a terrible beating, Baer went to his knee and took the full count in the fourth round.

23 ROCKY GRAZIANO

Record: 67-10-6 (52)

Years Fought: 1942-'52

Titles Held: World Middleweight 1947-'48



Graziano's overhand right belts Charlie Fusari

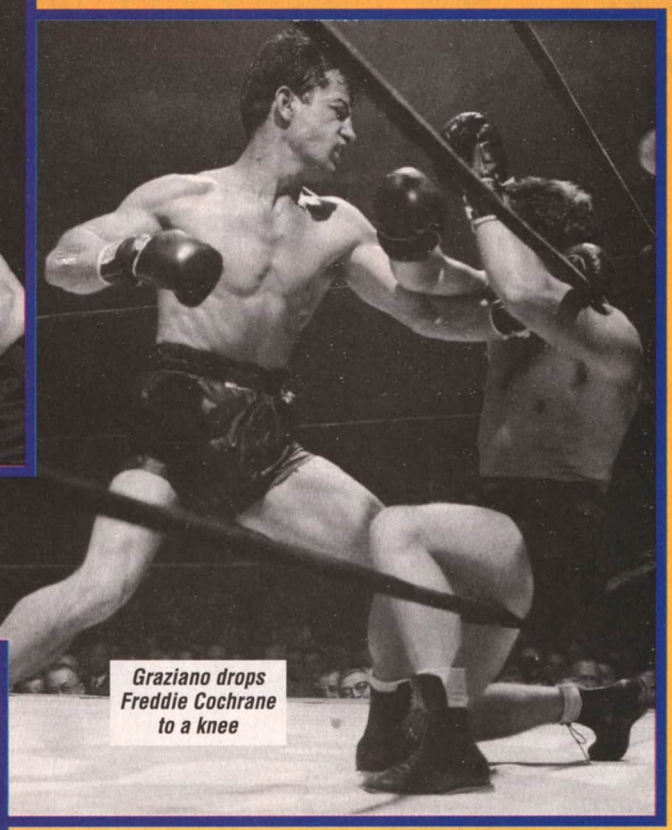
Best Punch: Graziano had one goal going into a fight: nail you with the right. He didn't care much for jabbing or for going to the body or even for a good left hook. Every bit of his power could be found at the end of a screaming right cross. If he could catch you with it, it was pretty likely that you were going to wake up in the dressing room.

Greatest Knockout: Forget the Zale fights. In June 1945, Graziano was getting his head handed to him in New York by smooth-boxing Freddie Cochrane. He wasn't far from a title shot, but for 9½ rounds, he couldn't find the sweet spot on Cochrane's noggin. In the 10th, the right landed home and all that good work Cochrane did went to waste. They did it again two months later. Same thing: Graziano KO 10.

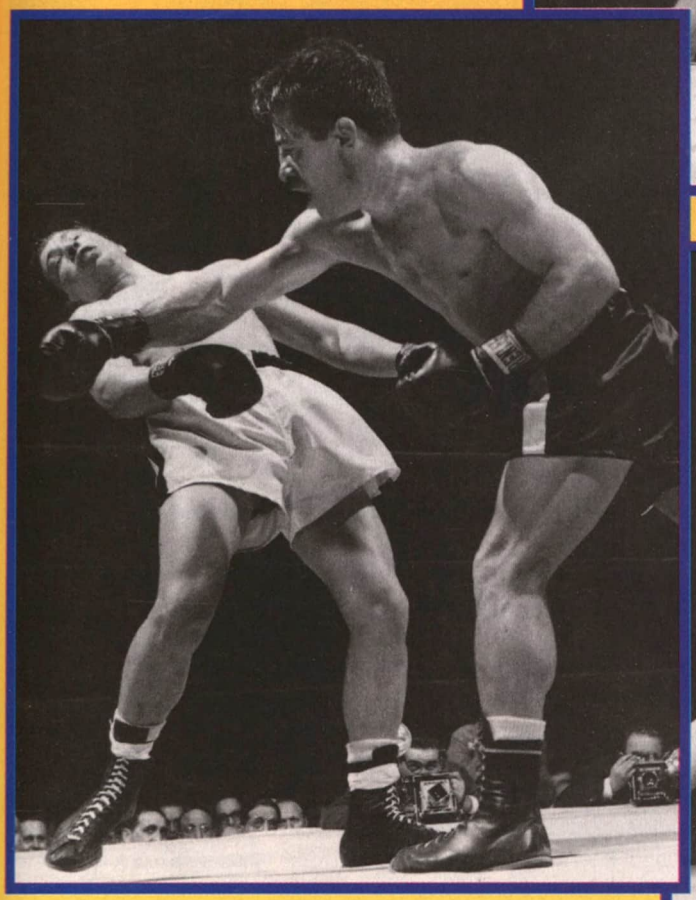
Statistical Analysis: For all the power in his right mitt, Graziano never could put together a formidable knockout streak. In both 1943 and '45, he won six straight by kayo, and that was as long as the streak got. He scored five straight knockouts three times: in '44, '50, and '50-'51.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Graziano knocked out a lot of guys the first time he touched them with the right, but in three

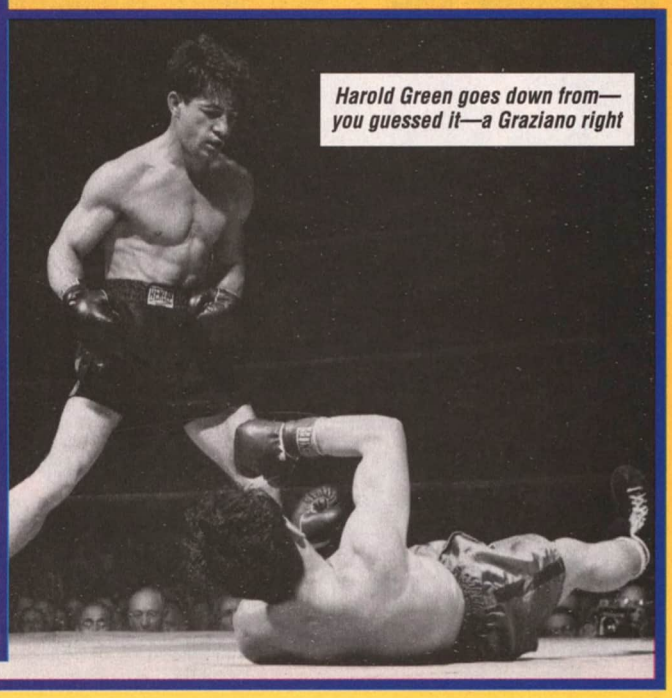
Rocky blasts Tony Zale with a right en route to victory in their second fight



Graziano drops Freddie Cochrane to a knee



Tony Janiro is in trouble after a Graziano right hand



Harold Green goes down from—you guessed it—a Graziano right

tries he couldn't stop Charley McPherson. All three meetings were in 1943—in Brooklyn, in Elizabeth, New Jersey, and in New York City—and the best Graziano could do was a draw and two six-round decision wins.

Beyond The Punch: Not much to say here: Graziano was a straight-ahead right-hand puncher, disinterested in defense, manners, and pretense. He could slip a jab if he was in the mood, but follow it with something and he was right there to catch it. No apologies. He was there to land the right. Most of the time that was enough.

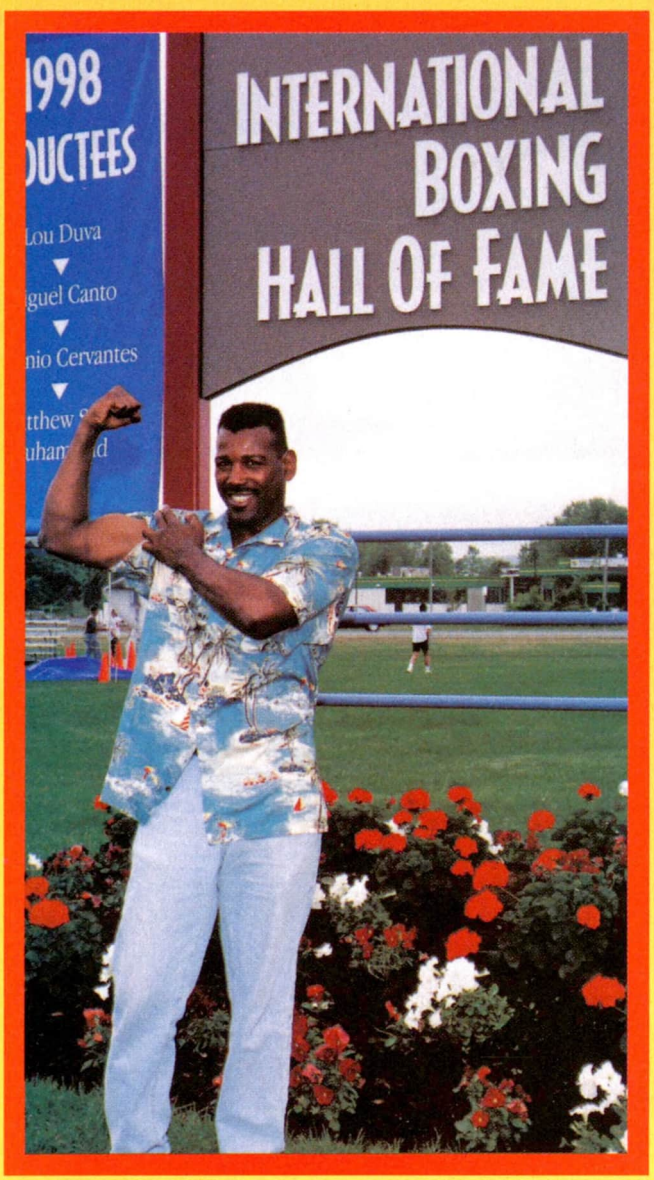
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Graziano could have used a better chin and a sturdier diaphragm, too, in his two losses to Tony Zale. He didn't have trouble finding Zale, especially in the first fight, but he couldn't take what Zale was throwing back. And in the rubber match especially, Zale ravaged him to the body.

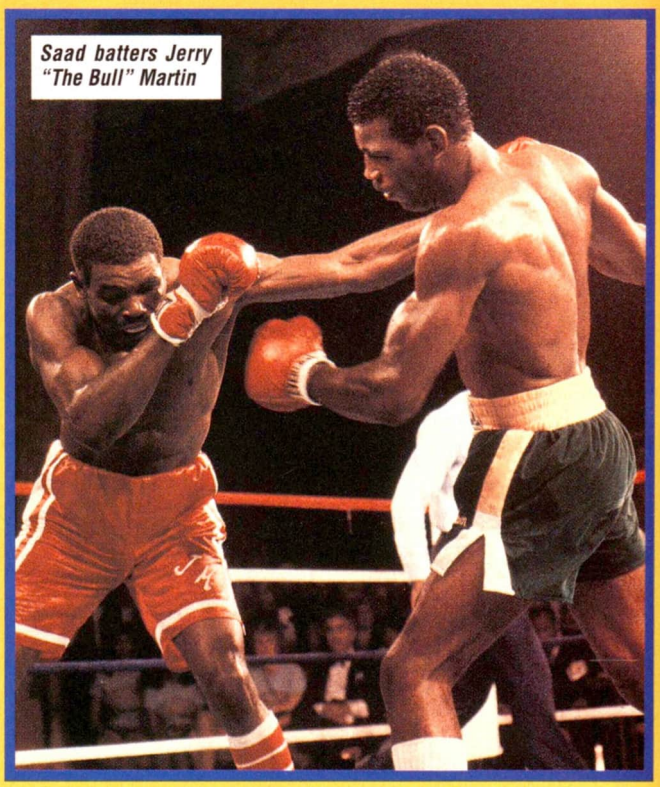
24 MATTHEW SAAD MUHAMMAD

Record: 39-16-3 (29)

Years Fought: 1974-'92

Titles Held: WBC Light Heavyweight 1979-'81




Saad batters Jerry "The Bull" Martin

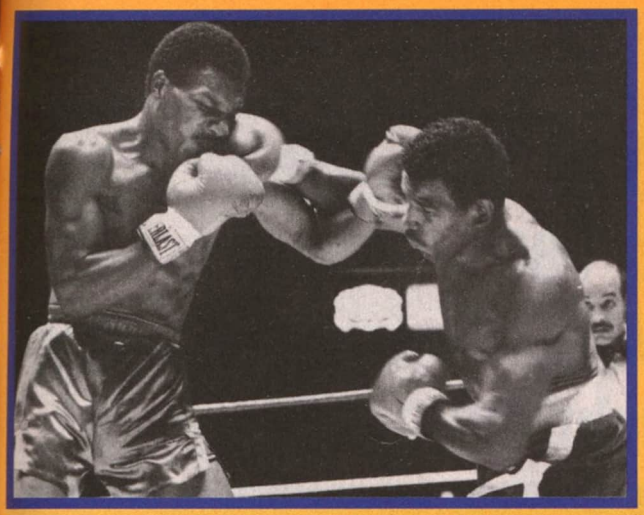
Best Punch: Saad Muhammad's booming overhand right saved the day—not to mention the title—numerous times. It saved him against Jerry "The Bull" Martin and Vonzell Johnson and Marvin Johnson and especially against John Conteh the first time. Typically thrown behind a thudding jab and eyes squinting through blood, Saad Muhammad's overhand right was relied on to render nil all the good work an opponent had gotten done in previous rounds. It usually came through.

Greatest Knockout: Muhammad's title fight rematch against tough Yaqui Lopez in McAfee, New Jersey, in July 1980 started out terribly for the defending champion. Lopez jumped to an early lead and spent long stretches battering Muhammad against the ropes. But he wore himself out trying for the kayo, and Muhammad roared back to bludgeon and stop him in the 14th round in one of the all-time great light heavyweight fights.

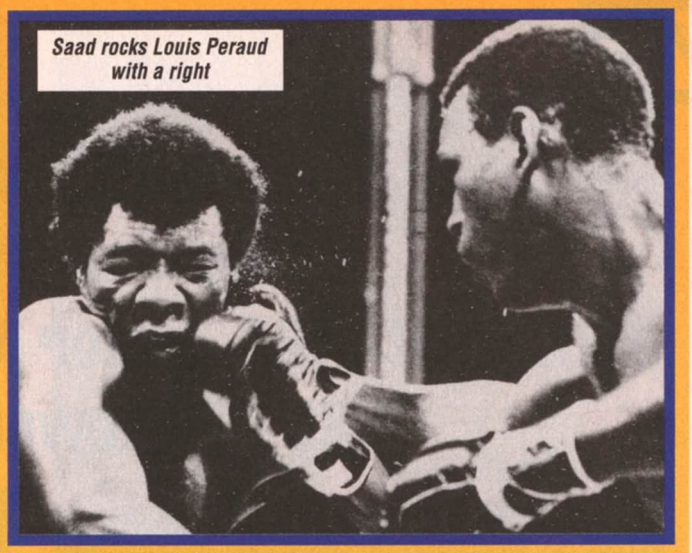
Statistical Analysis: Only once did Saad Muhammad go the distance in a title fight—a disputed win over Conteh. He scored eight knockouts and was stopped twice, meaning 91 percent of his title fights ended early one way or the other. Also, 12 of his 16 career losses, or 75 percent, came after he lost the title to Dwight Muhammad Qawi.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Awkward southpaw and future cruiserweight titlist Marvin Camel split a pair of bouts with Saad Muhammad in 1976. In the first, Camel lost a split decision in Stockton, California. Camel took the rematch, which was held in his hometown of Missoula, Montana, by 10-round majority decision.

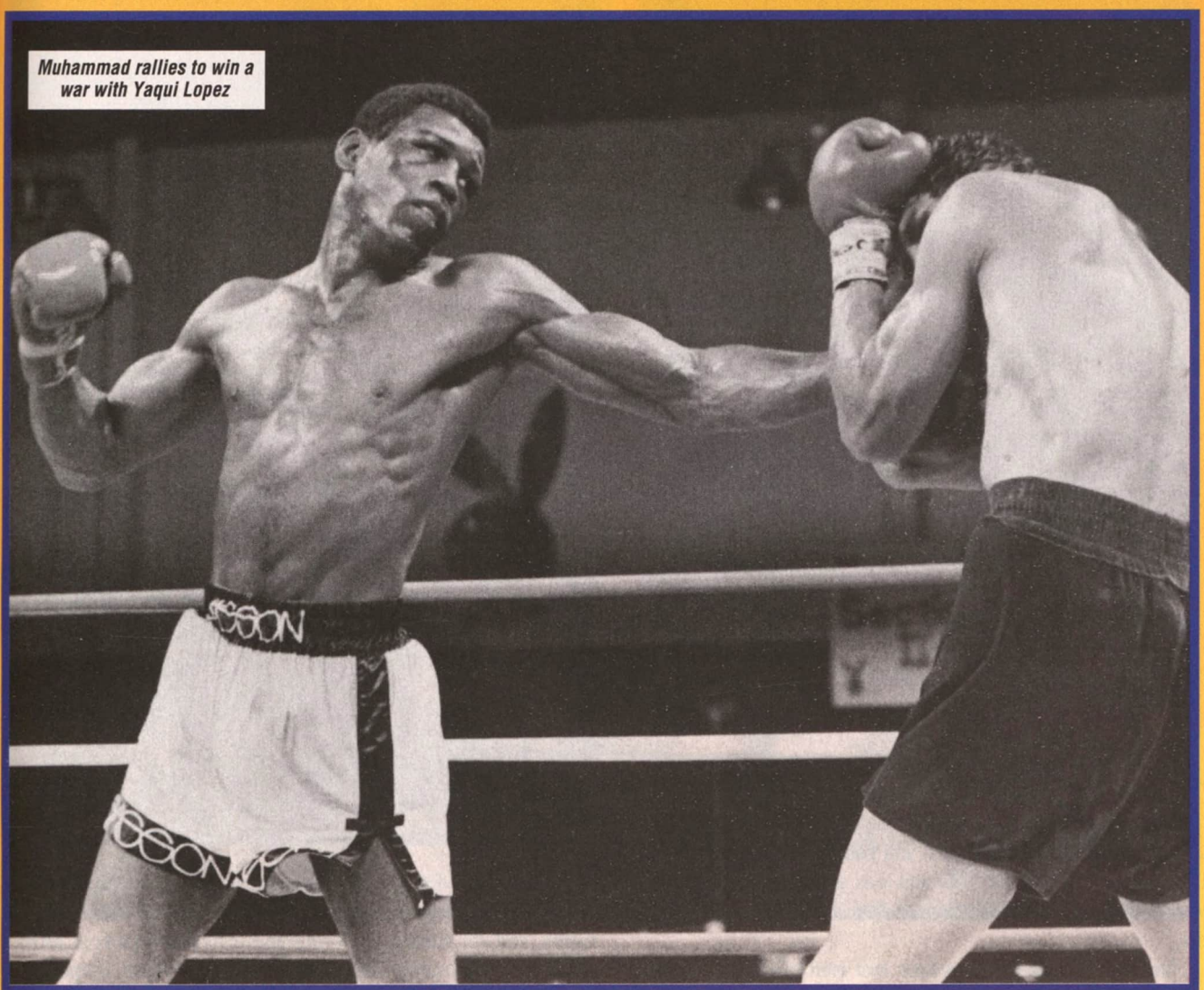
Beyond The Punch: It seems impossible now, but early in



Larry Davis eats a searing right hand



Saad rocks Louis Peraud with a right



Muhammad rallies to win a war with Yaqui Lopez

his career, Saad Muhammad was more boxer than puncher. He liked to counter more than slug and even later, after he became a champion, he could fire out a nice quick jab when he wanted to and work some defense, but it was rare. A close decision loss to Eddie Mustafa Muhammad early in his career convinced him to change his style. With his heavy hands, iron chin, and slower-than-average foot speed, it was a natural transition.

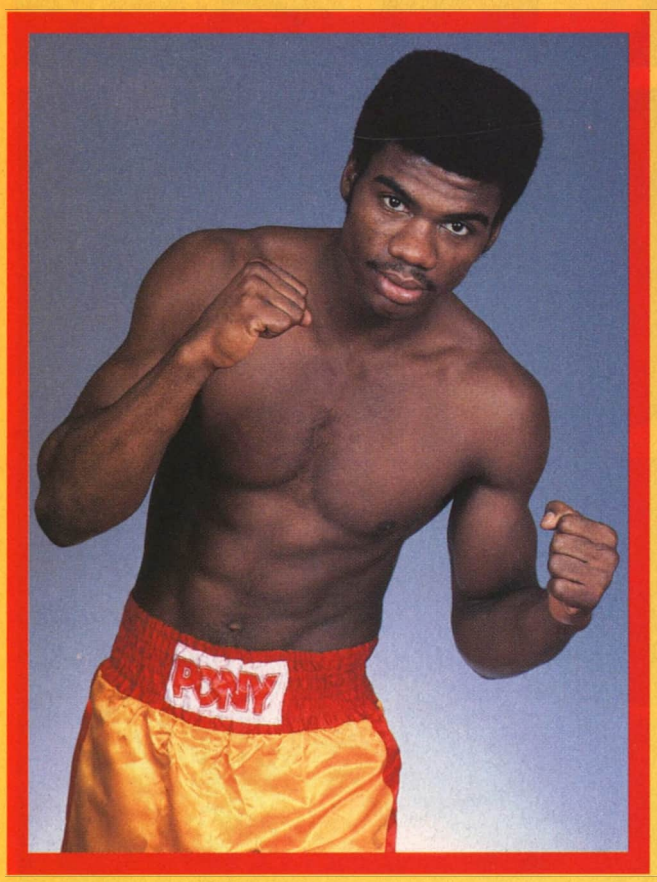
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: It may be that all the hard fights had caught up with Saad Muhammad by 1981, but either way, Qawi owned him. He battered and stopped Saad Muhammad in 10 to take the title in December, and then overwhelmed him in six in the rematch the following year.

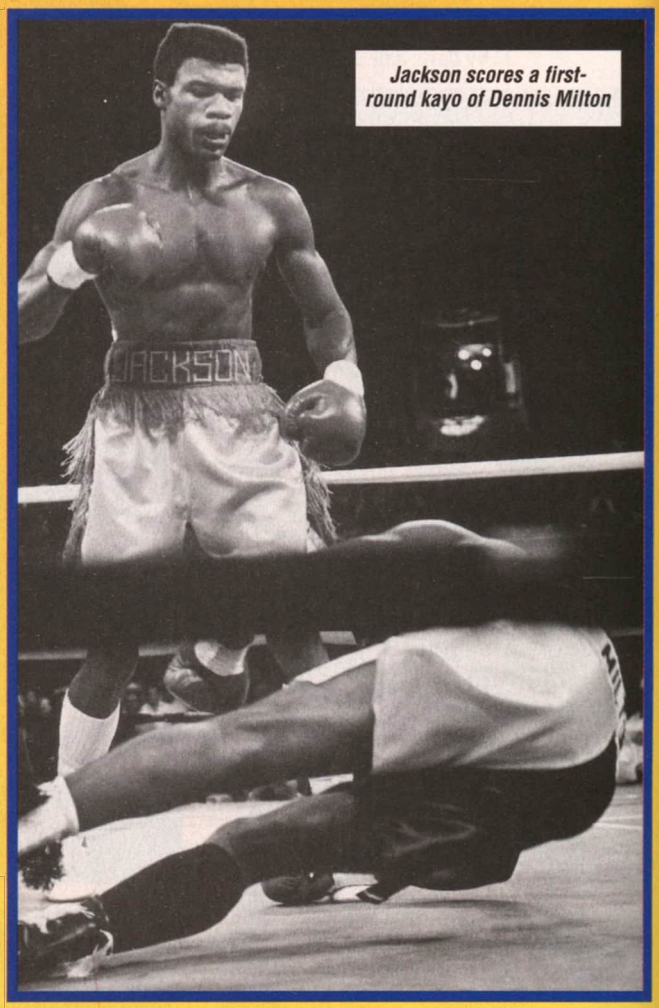
25 JULIAN JACKSON

Record: 55-6 (49)

Years Fought: 1981-'98

Titles Held: WBA Junior Middleweight 1987-'89; WBC Middleweight 1990-'93





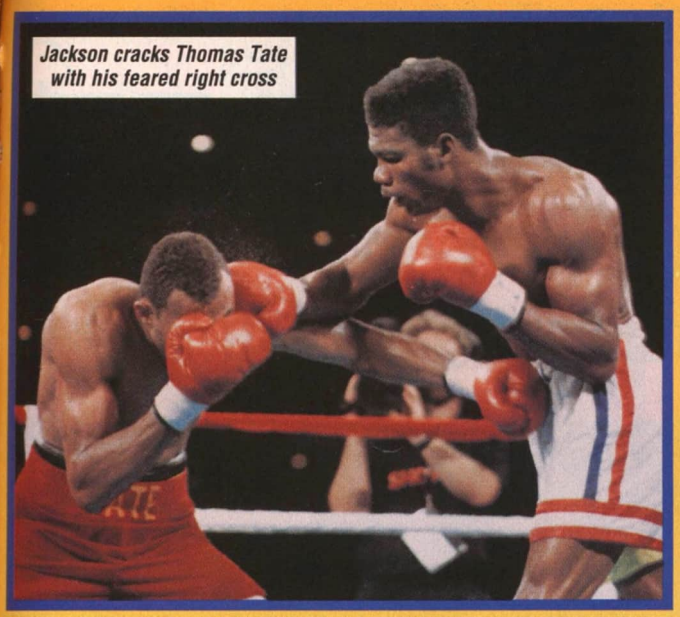
Jackson scores a first-round kayo of Dennis Milton

Best Punch: Jackson's right cross was arguably the most feared punch in the sport in the late-1980s and early -'90s. Short, impossibly quick, and completely potent, it vaporized Terry Norris in July '89 and was the dominant weapon in wins over Buster Drayton, Thomas Tate, Dennis Milton, and others.

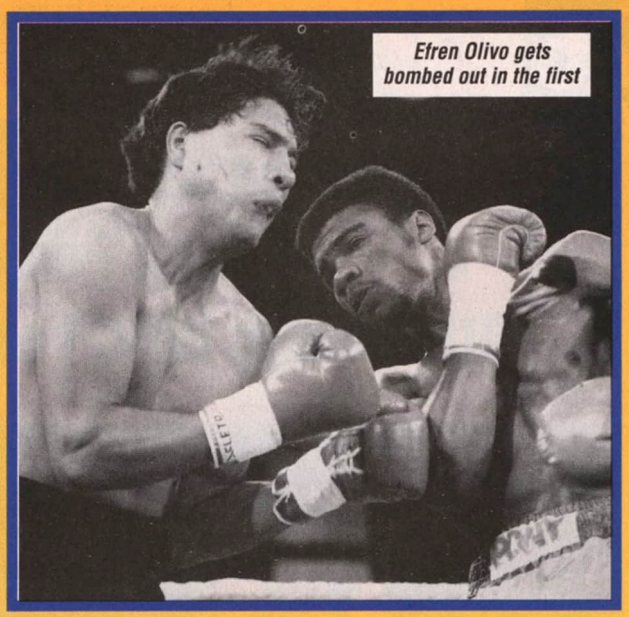
Greatest Knockout: Awkward Brit Herol Graham was thoroughly outboxing Jackson in their November 1990 middleweight title match in Spain. In the fourth round, Jackson landed his right on the chin, and Graham, who had never before been stopped, froze, went limp, and crashed onto his back where he remained, unconscious, for several terrible minutes.

Statistical Analysis: After winning two of his first seven fights by decision, Jackson scored his next 37 victories by kayo, a streak interrupted midway through by a second-round knockout loss to Mike McCallum. He was stopped in five of his last 14 fights, and for such a terrifying and efficient knockout artist, ended up with a fairly misleading kayo rate of "just" 80 percent. He never lost a bout by decision.

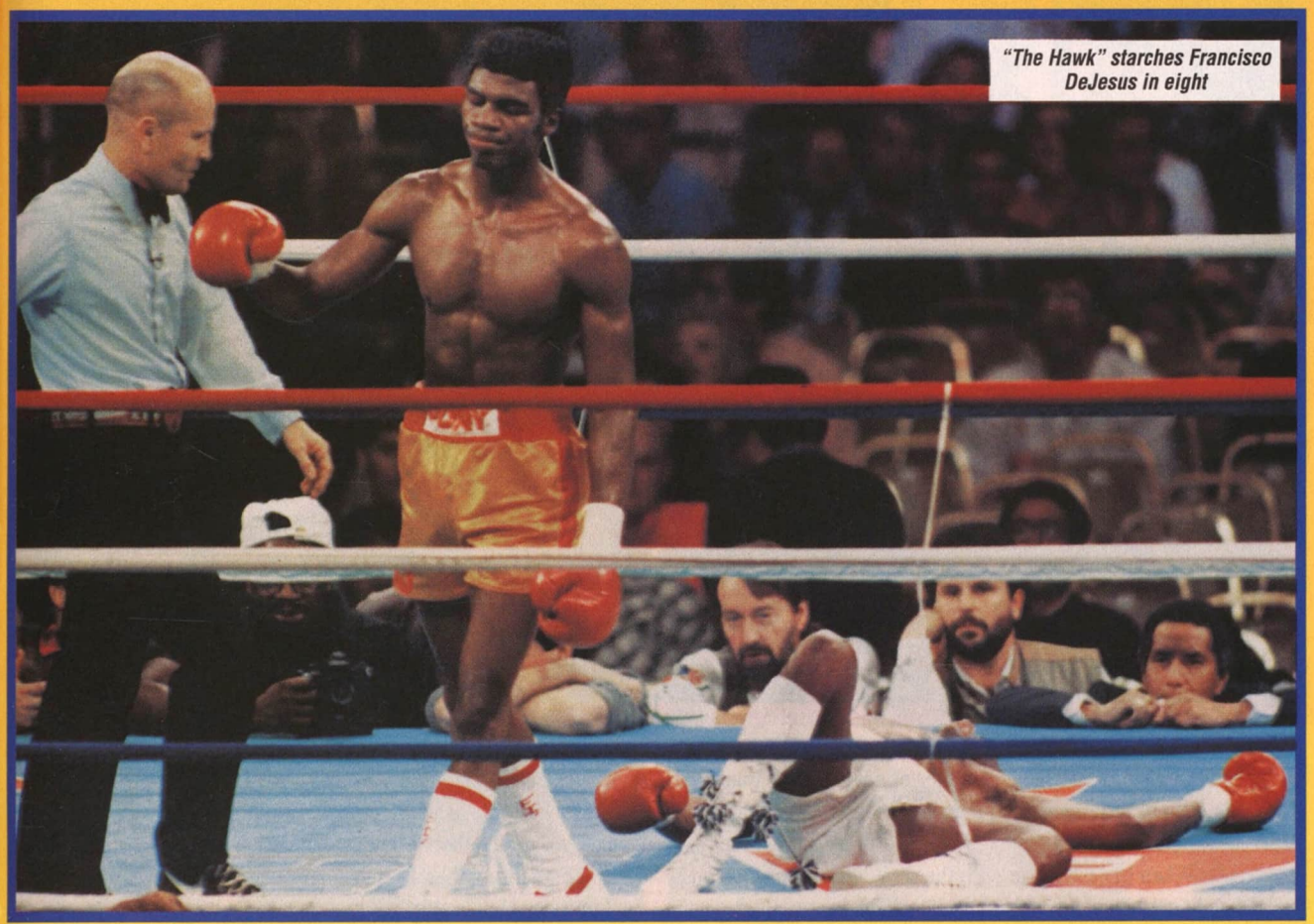
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In defense of the WBC middleweight title in August 1992, Jackson struggled to land consistently against the tricky Thomas Tate. He hurt Tate several times and had him going more than once, but never could find the sweet spot and had to settle for a fairly lopsided unanimous decision win.



Jackson cracks Thomas Tate with his feared right cross



Efren Olivo gets bombed out in the first



"The Hawk" starches Francisco DeJesus in eight

Beyond The Punch: Jackson had solid skills and fast enough hands to strike down the guys that ran from him (and most everyone did). He could be out-maneuvered, however, as he wasn't terribly nimble—what true puncher is? His most glaring weakness was a soft chin, which most opponents weren't brave enough to reach but which is evidenced just the same by his six knockout losses, even if most came late in his career. If you could get close to Jackson and nail him a couple of times, you could hurt him. But you couldn't let him touch you.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Jackson did well enough in the early rounds against heavy-handed challenger Gerald McClellan in their May 1993 middleweight title fight. But he walked into a right hand in the fifth and was dramatically stopped. He fared far worse in the rematch the following year, getting blasted out in the opening round.

26 DANNY LOPEZ

Record: 42-6 (39)

Years Fought: 1971-'92

Titles Held: WBC Featherweight 1976-'80

Lopez fires a left at Yoshinobu Goto

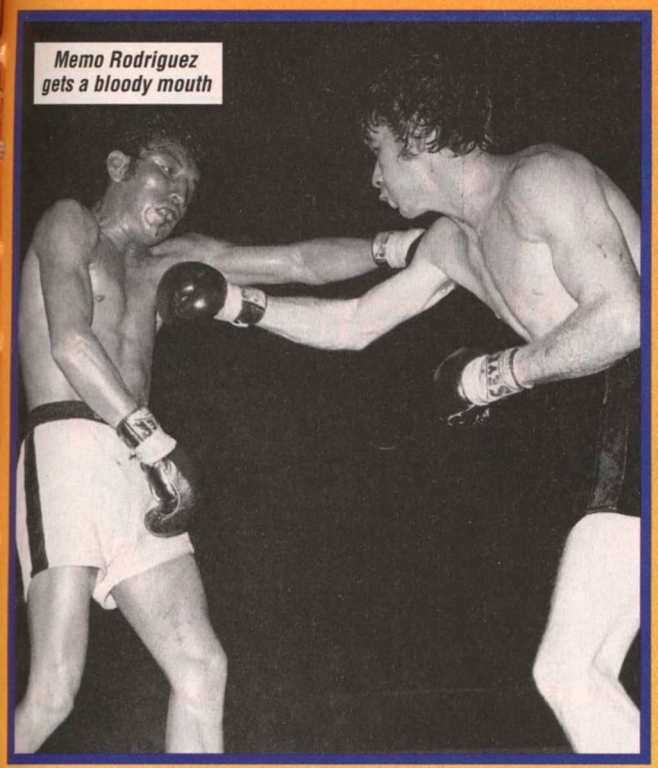
Best Punch: Lopez' sledgehammer of a right cross made up for a lot of deficiencies. It didn't matter if he was taking a beating for an entire round, an entire fight, or just the last 10 seconds. When he lashed out with the right, always straight and true, the fight could turn in a moment. It was his best weapon, outside of an elephant-size heart and a sturdy chin.

Greatest Knockout: In June 1979, Lopez fought a scintillating war with Mike Ayala. The two landed bombs all night, and eventually Lopez' greater firepower wore down the challenger, who later would say he fought strung out on heroin. In THE RING'S Fight of the Year, Lopez scored a typically stirring knockout in the 15th round.

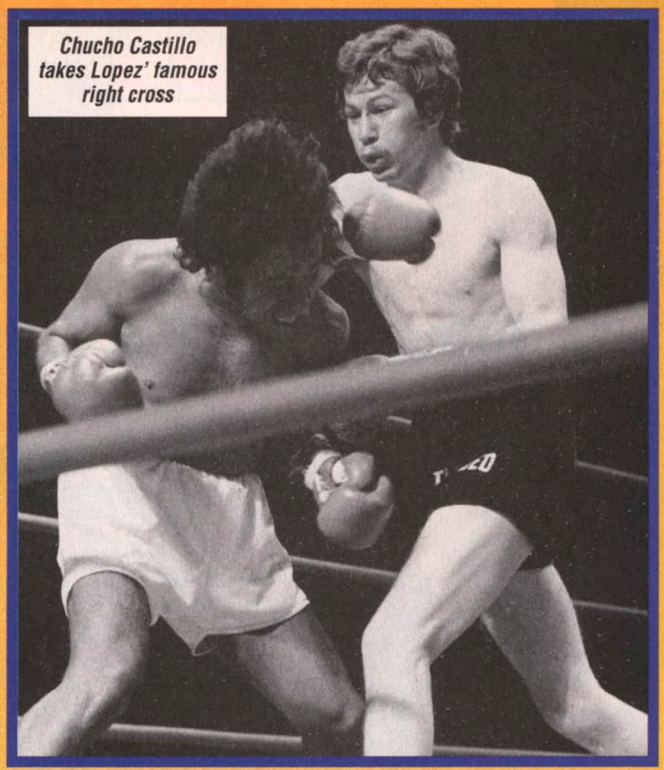
Statistical Analysis: Lopez won his first 21 fights by knockout, the longest kayo streak of any featherweight champion, including Sandy Saddler, Alexis Arguello, and Naseem Hamed. His kayo percentage of 81 percent is the second only to Naseem Hamed among featherweight titleholders, and Lopez fought much stiffer competition than Hamed.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Lopez was 21-0 with 21 knockouts when he was taken the distance in Los Angeles by journeyman Genzo Kurosawa in January 1974. Kurosawa, who fought many of the bigger-name West Coast featherweights of the era, was stopped in nine rounds in his next fight by young power-punching sensation Bobby Chacon.

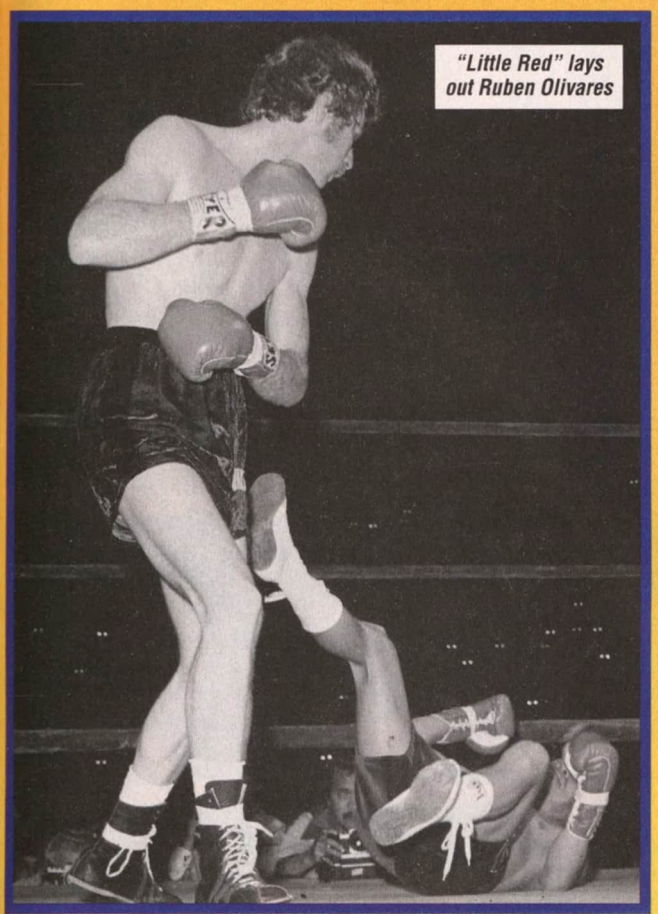
Beyond The Punch: Lopez was a stand-up, jab-right-hand type of fighter. He didn't duck a lot or move around the ring or feint. He wasn't a big bodypuncher. Jab, right hand. That was his game. He got you to come into his range by being pitifully easy to



Memo Rodriguez gets a bloody mouth



Chucho Castillo takes Lopez' famous right cross



"Little Red" lays out Ruben Olivares

Lopez rattles Jorge Reyes with a right uppercut

hit. Once you got there and he landed the right, things got scary.

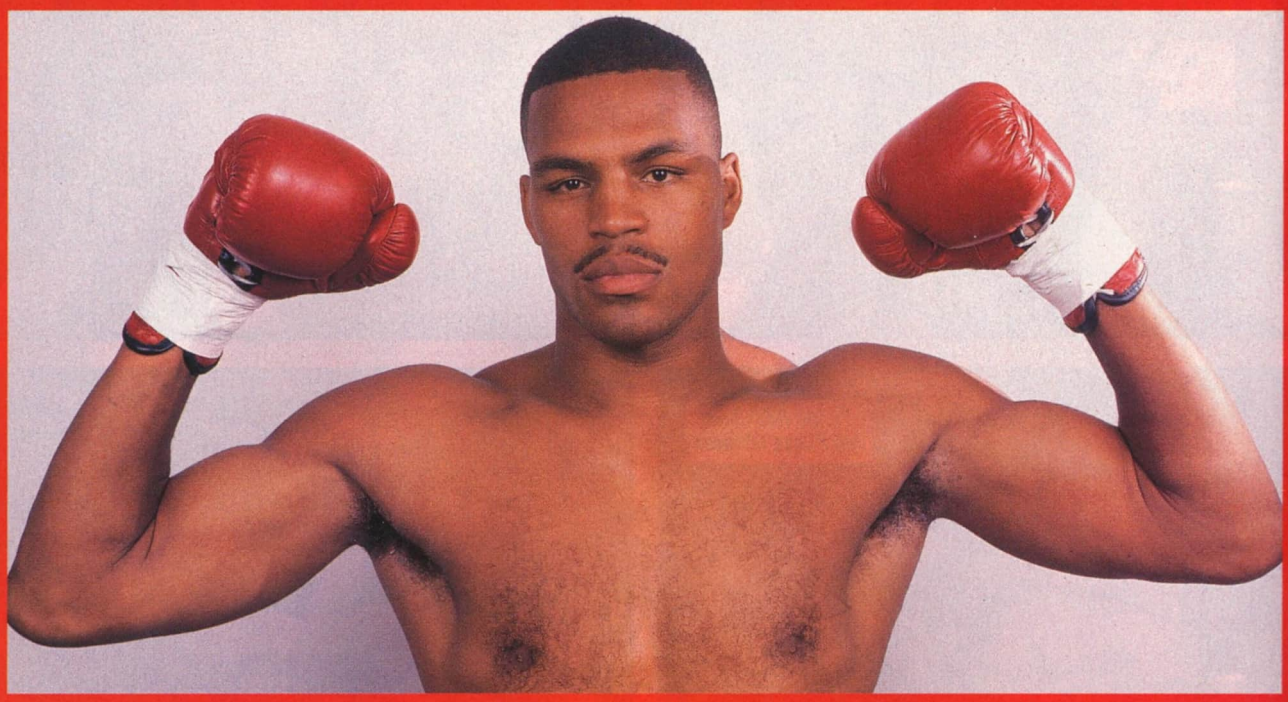
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Lopez put in 27 rounds with the great Salvador Sanchez and not only couldn't he stop him, he never gave him a moment of real concern. Sanchez stopped Lopez in 13 to win the title, then stopped him in 14 four months later. Lopez never stopped trying to land the right, but Sanchez was almost never there to take it. On the few occasions when the right got home, Sanchez took it with aplomb.

27 GERALD McCLELLAN

Record: 31-3 (29)

Years Fought: 1988-'95

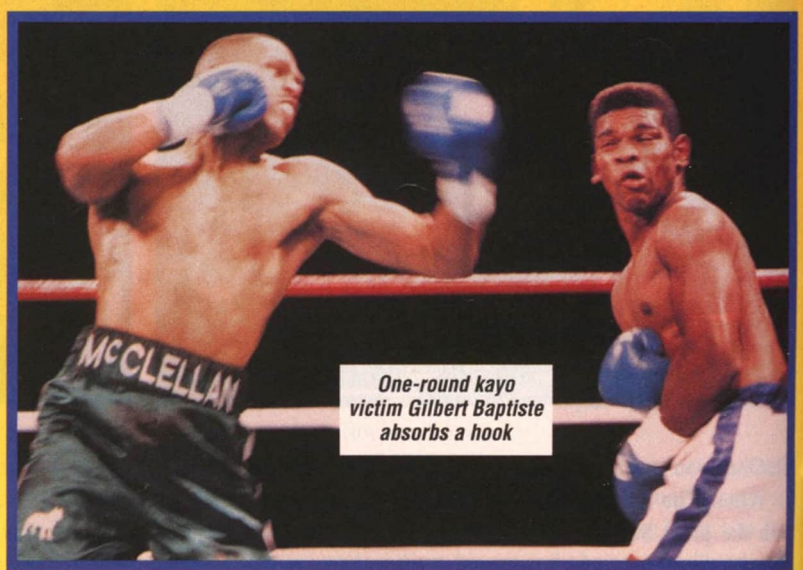
Titles Held: WBC Middleweight 1993-'94



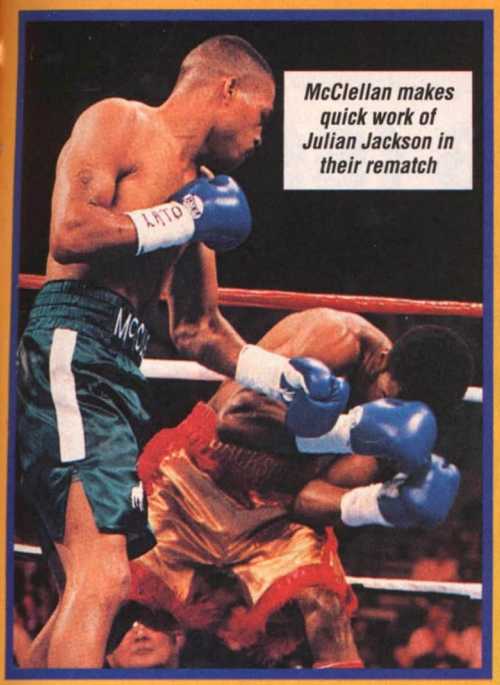
Best Punch: McClellan wasn't the most technically sound guy out there and his right cross wasn't as short as Joe Louis' or as straight and fast as Thomas Hearns'. But when he got it home, tough guys went down, face-first some of the time. McClellan threw it rushing in or stalking and he didn't care much where it landed so long as he could keep belting you with it until you went. The more he got to land it, the better he liked it.

Greatest Knockout: McClellan overwhelmed and obliterated the smaller Julian Jackson in defense of the WBC middleweight title in Las Vegas in 1994. It was the rematch; McClellan had claimed the title with a fifth-round stoppage the first time, but Jackson had done well early, stinging McClellan with hard rights. This time McClellan didn't let him get started. He jumped on Jackson at the opening bell, hurt him almost immediately, and stopped him before the round was through.

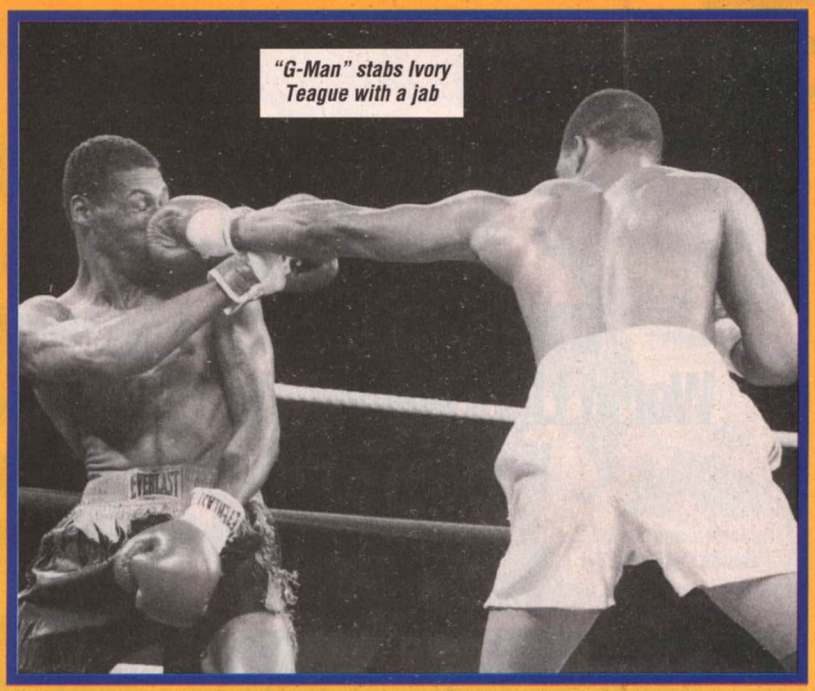
Statistical Analysis: A full 20 of McClellan's 29 career knockouts—69 percent—came in the first round. Between December 1990 and November '92, he scored eight straight knockouts, seven of them in the first. Seven of his first 10 wins were by one-round knockout (the other three all



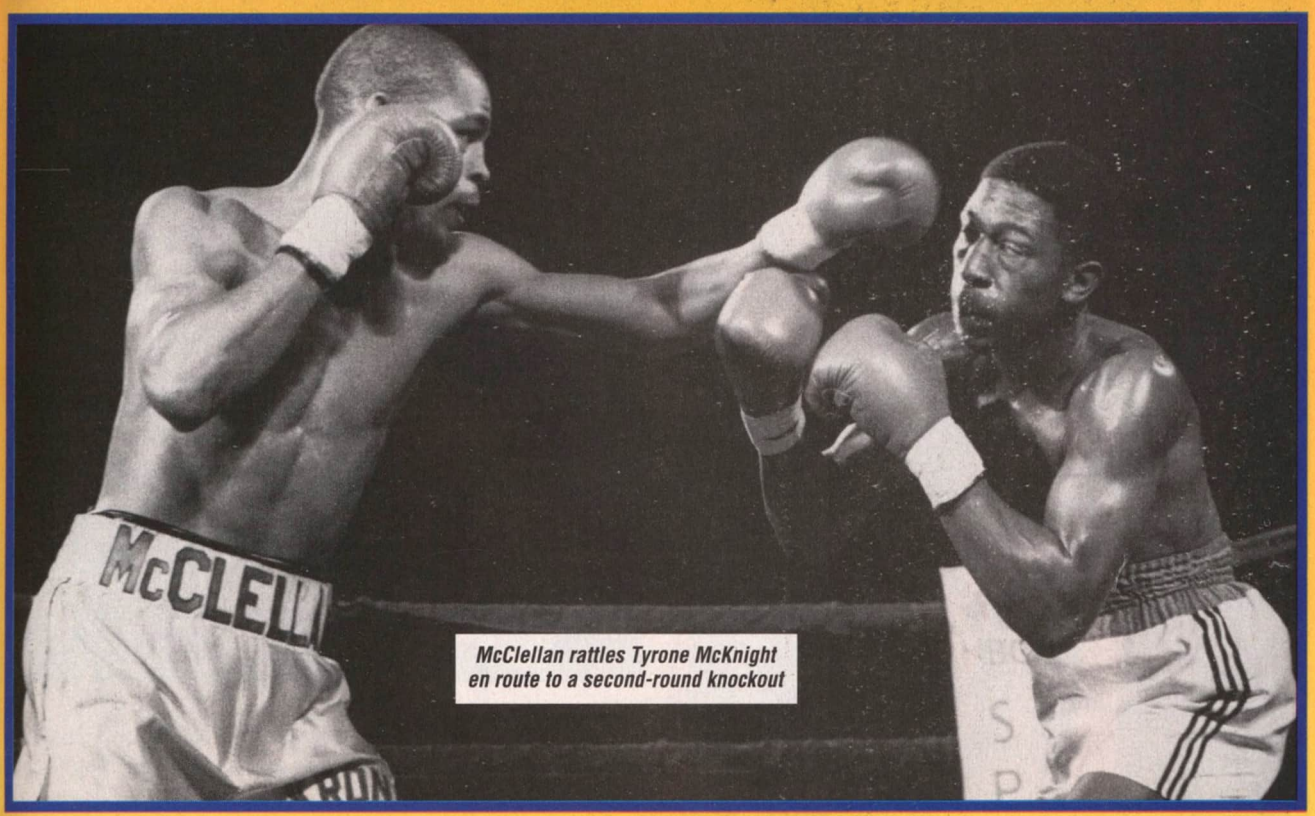
One-round kayo victim Gilbert Baptiste absorbs a hook



McClellan makes quick work of Julian Jackson in their rematch



"G-Man" stabs Ivory Teague with a jab



McClellan rattles Tyrone McKnight en route to a second-round knockout

ended in the second round), and during his middleweight reign, all three of his title defenses were over in one.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Tough-as-a-rock journeyman Sanderline Williams took McClellan the full eight-round distance in Auburn Hills, Michigan, in August 1990. McClellan was in good company: Williams also went the distance against James Toney, Nigel Benn, Frank Tate, Reggie Johnson, Merqui Sosa, Iran Barkley, and Herol Graham.

Beyond The Punch: McClellan had decent enough skills, but most things were predicated on his landing the right hand. He was expert at drying out and rehydrating before a fight and, as a result, was almost always bigger and stronger than his opponent when he got into the ring. But eventually that practice caught up with him.

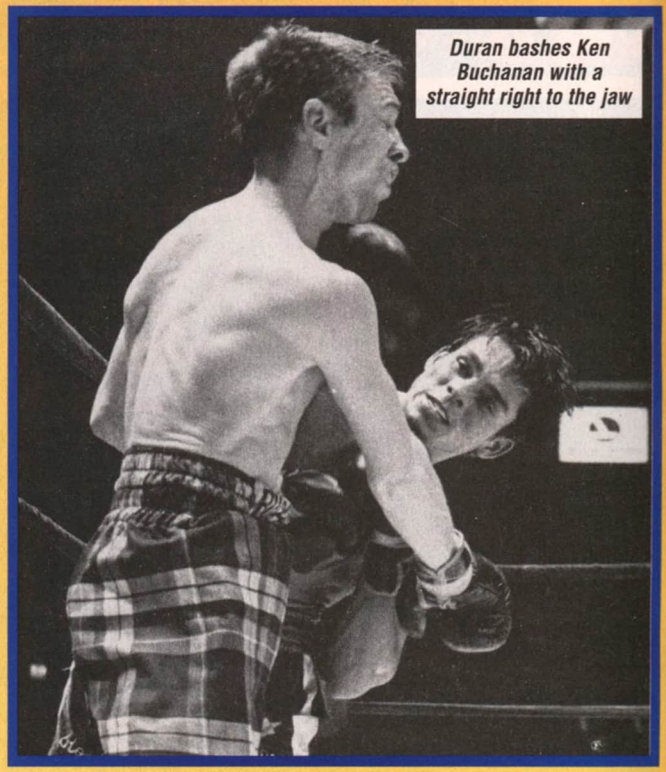
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Maybe if it hadn't taken place in England, Nigel Benn wouldn't have gotten out of the first round of his savage slugfest with McClellan in February 1995. But he did—he climbed back through the ropes, survived the round, and took a hell of a lot of punches before stopping McClellan in the 10th and ending his career.

28 ROBERTO DURAN

Record: 104-16 (69)

Years Fought: 1967-2001

Titles Held: WBA Lightweight 1972-'78; World Lightweight 1978; WBC Welterweight 1980; WBA Junior Middleweight 1983-'84; WBC Middleweight 1989

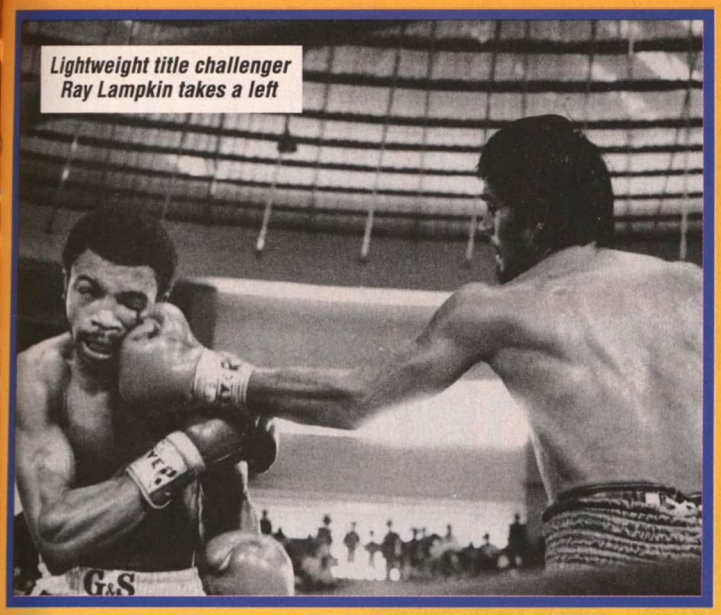


Duran bashes Ken Buchanan with a straight right to the jaw

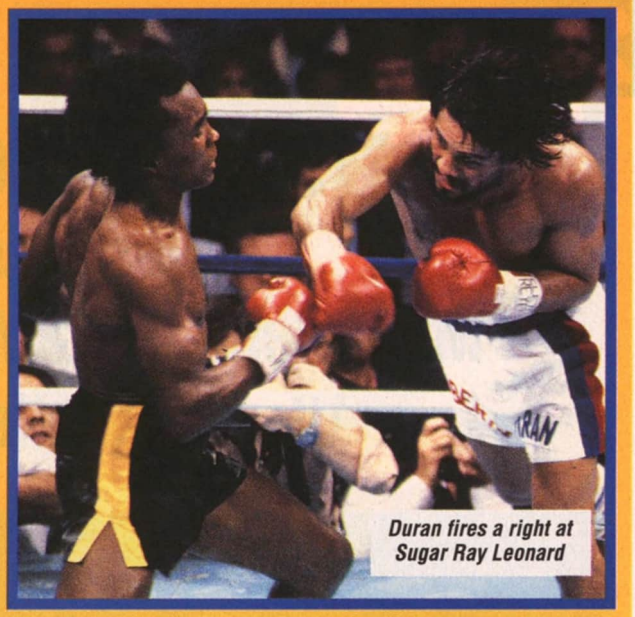
Best Punch: There's never been a fighter with a more complete arsenal than Duran. But it was the straight right that did it against Esteban DeJesus and later against Davey Moore and Iran Barkley and dozens of other guys Duran either clubbed into a stupor or hurt badly enough that they were done by the time the last bell rang. Duran could take you apart any way he chose on most nights. When he was done doing that, the right finished you off.

Greatest Knockout: Duran's brilliant, patient demolition of the excellent Esteban DeJesus in their title-unifying rubber match in January 1978 capped off possibly the most dominant reign ever by a lightweight champion. Duran started slowly, wary of DeJesus' left hook. He came on after the fifth, torturing DeJesus to the body, flooring him with a straight right in the 12th, and stopping him moments later.

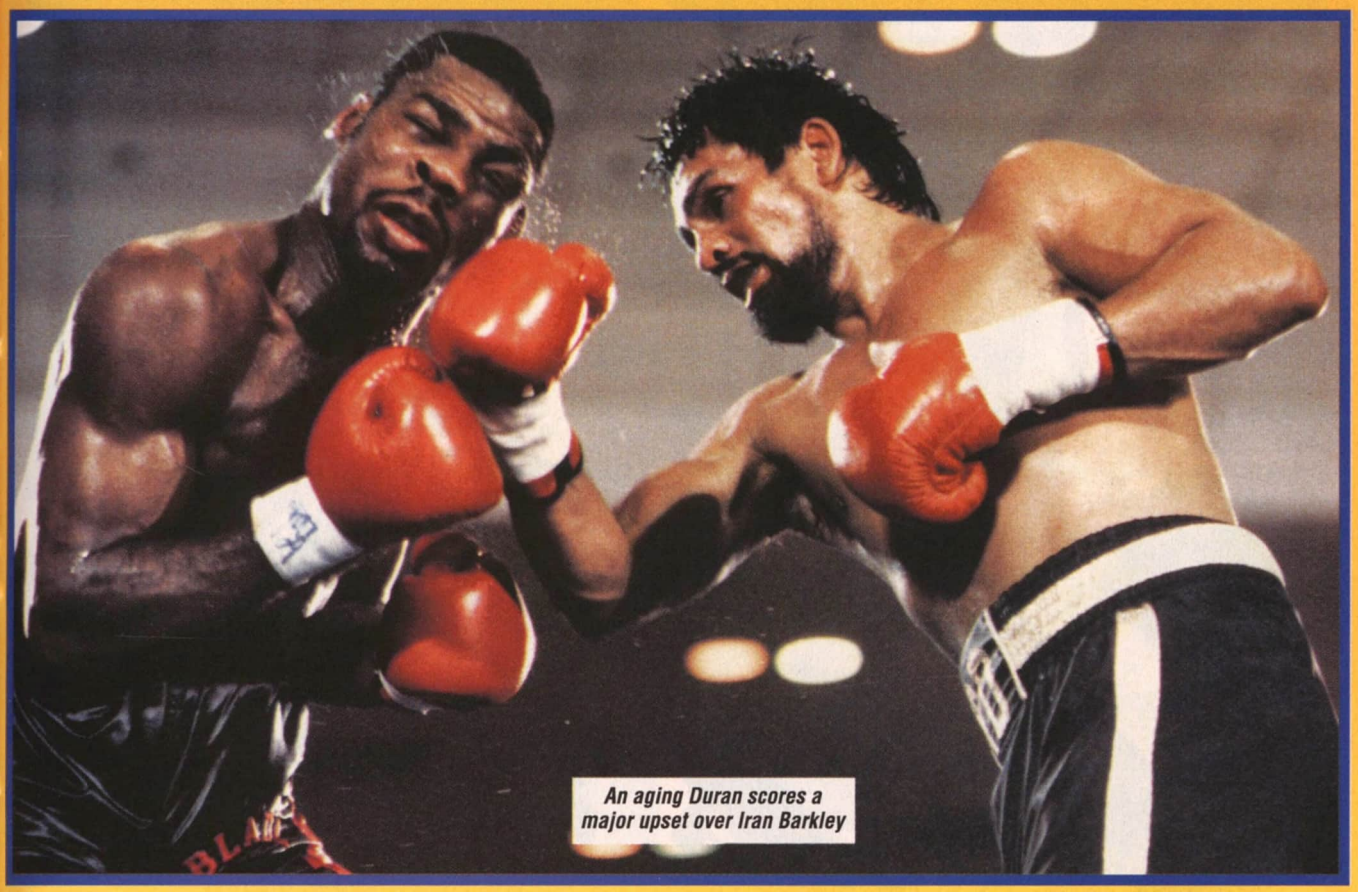
Statistical Analysis: Although a murderous puncher, Duran was never a one-punch kind of guy, even at lightweight: His 13 championship fights at 135 went an average of 10 rounds. Also,



Lightweight title challenger Ray Lampkin takes a left



Duran fires a right at Sugar Ray Leonard



An aging Duran scores a major upset over Iran Barkley

he engaged in 23 non-title fights during his reign. Interestingly, those lasted an average of five rounds.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Puerto Rico's Edwin Viruet was the only challenger to last the distance with Duran during the Panamanian's reign as lightweight champion. He did it in September 1977 in Philadelphia in Duran's 11th title defense. He also lost a 10-round decision to Duran in a non-title fight in New York in 1975.

Beyond The Punch: Often overshadowed by Duran's power and ferocity was his ring intelligence and superb skills on both offense and defense. He always threw in combination, was a crippling bodypuncher, and slipped and rolled with many more punches than it seemed. He wasn't just a puncher; he was a complete prize fighter.

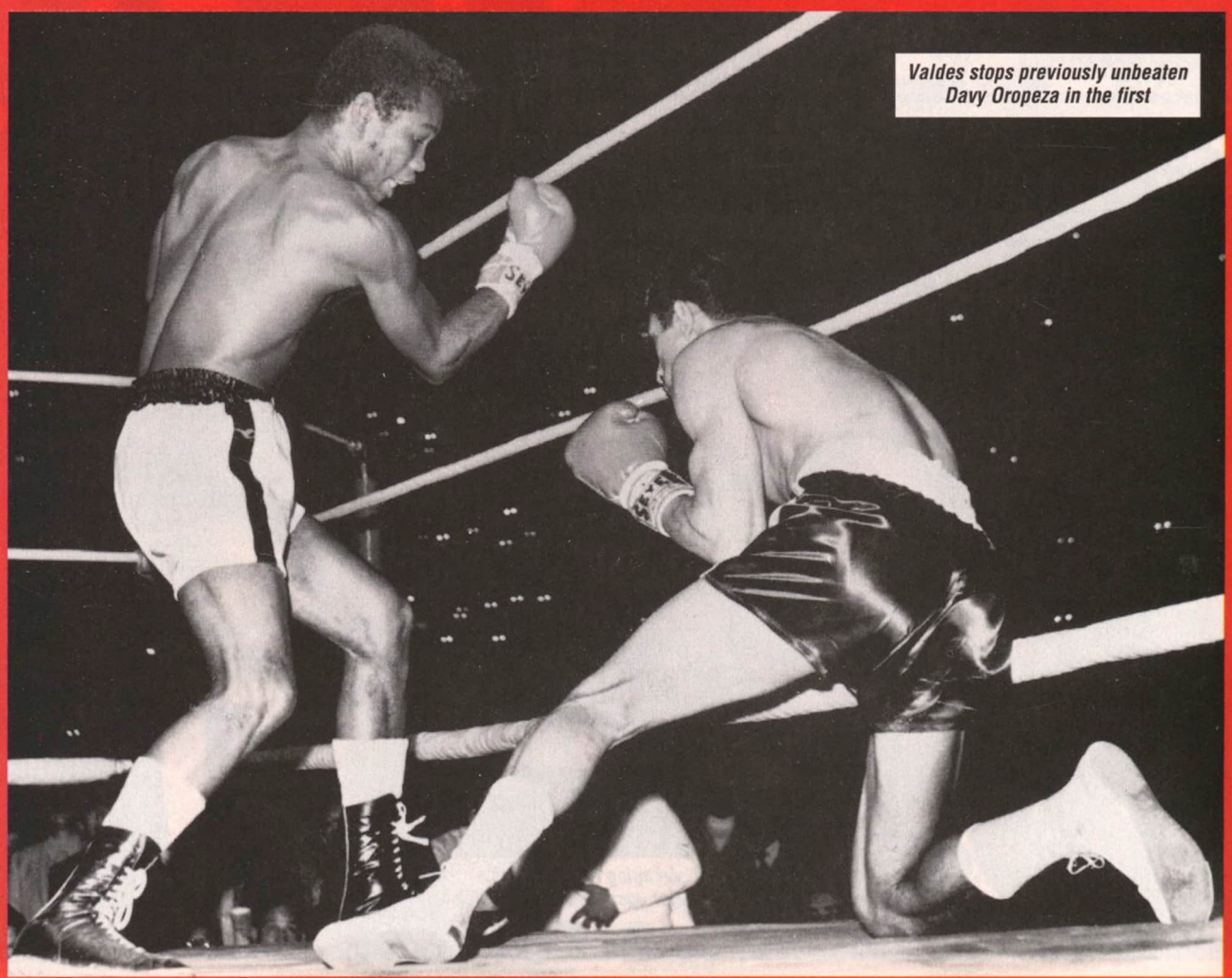
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: You can't hurt what you can't hit, and Duran couldn't lay a glove on Ray Leonard during their infamous rematch in New Orleans in November 1980. When you want to know why Duran kept fighting until he was 50, remember that in one of the most important matches of his career, he punked out. He spent the next 20-plus years trying to make up for it.

29 RODRIGO VALDES

Record: 63-8-2 (41)

Years Fought: 1963-'80

Titles Held: WBC Middleweight 1974-'76; World Middleweight 1977-'78

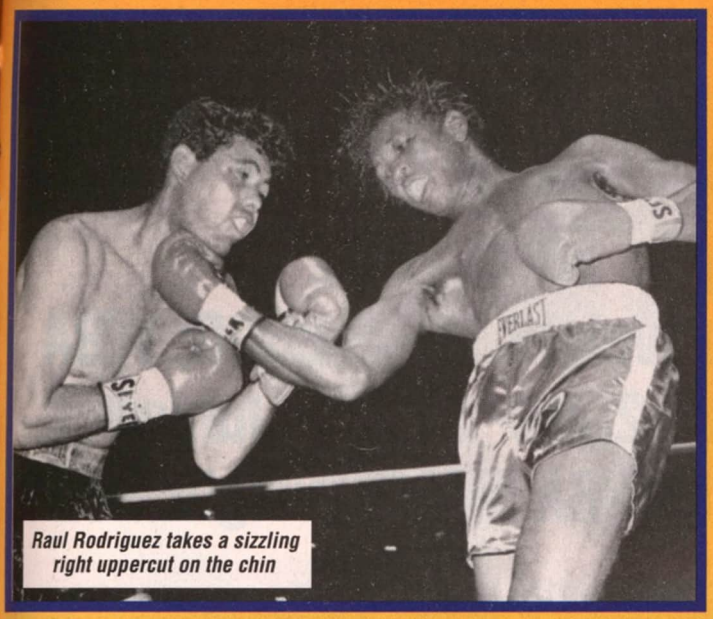


Valdes stops previously unbeaten Davy Oropeza in the first

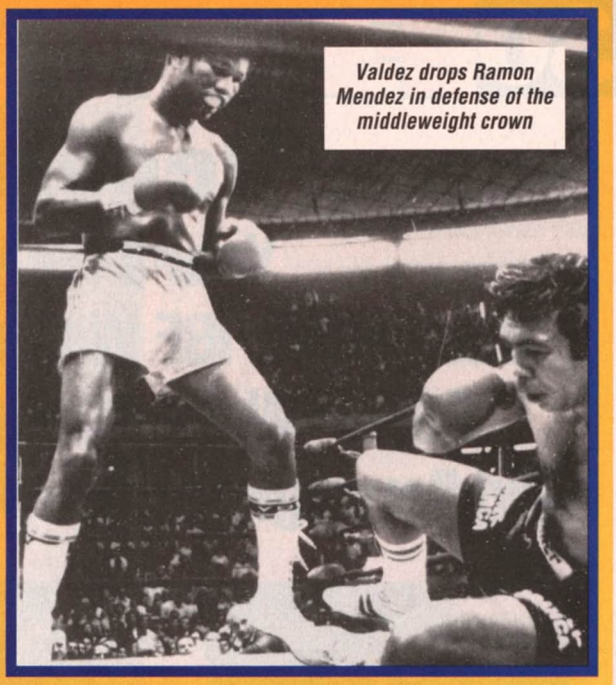
Best Punch: Valdes' straight right was a club. It was by far the hardest punch in the middleweight division throughout the 1970s, when there were several good middleweights who could crack. Put it this way: The great Carlos Monzon was floored one time in 13 years—just about his entire career—and it was Valdes who did it, with the right cross in their rematch in July 1977.

Greatest Knockout: After the WBC stripped Monzon of the middleweight belt for failing to defend against Valdes, Valdes and Phialdelphia's Bennie Briscoe met for the vacant title in Monte Carlo in May 1974. They slugged one another back and forth over the first six rounds. In the seventh, just as it appeared Briscoe was taking over, Valdes stepped in with a short right-cross, left-hook combination that dropped Briscoe and forced a TKO—the only stoppage loss of Briscoe's 96-fight career.

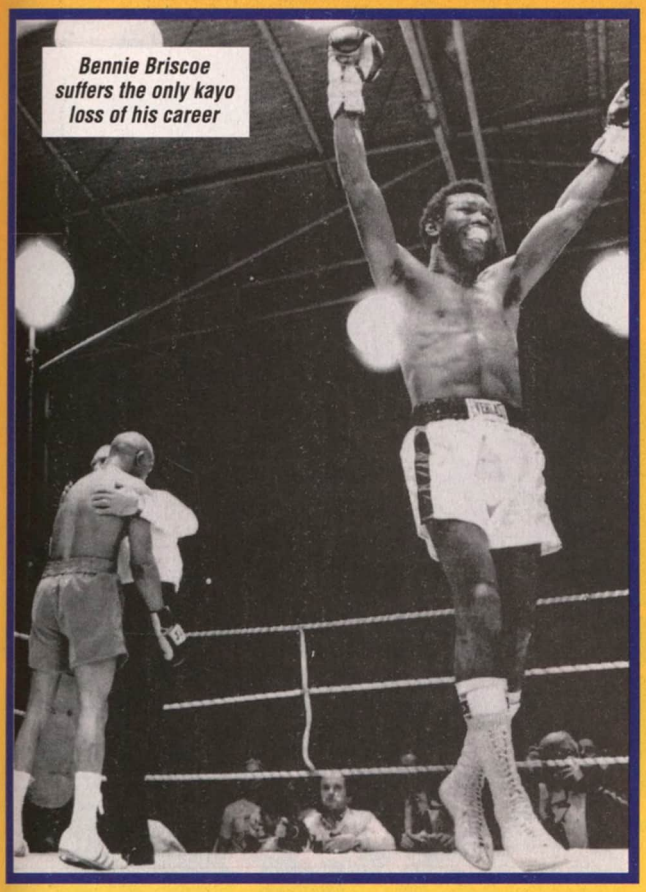
Statistical Analysis: It took a while for Valdes the puncher to get going. After his first 21 fights, he was 19-1-1 with just nine knockouts. Over the remainder of his career, 32 of his 44 wins (73 percent) came by kayo.



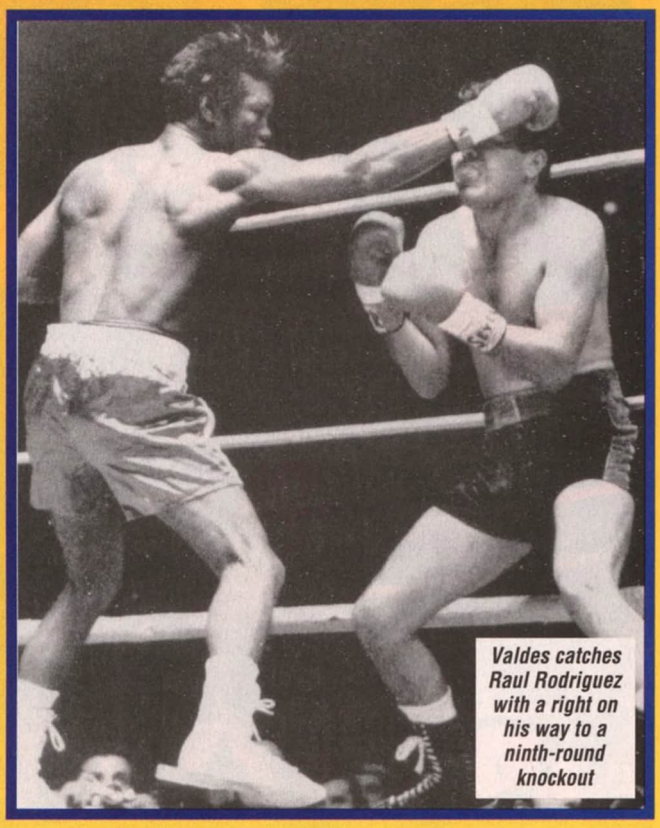
Raul Rodriguez takes a sizzling right uppercut on the chin



Valdez drops Ramon Mendez in defense of the middleweight crown



Bennie Briscoe suffers the only kayo loss of his career



Valdes catches Raul Rodriguez with a right on his way to a ninth-round knockout

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: If not for Monzon, Valdes might have dominated the 160-pound division. They first met in June 1976 in Monte Carlo in the richest fight in middleweight history. Monzon handled Valdes' best right hands, countered well throughout, and took a unanimous decision to unify the title. A little over a year later, he turned the trick again in Monte Carlo, and then retired.

Beyond The Punch: Valdes was a stand-up, aggressive powerpuncher who could take a guy out with either hand. He liked to throw the right from distance, but if you wanted to go inside, as Briscoe did in their third match, in November 1977, he could do that, too. You could out-maneuver Valdes and counter him if you were especially good at it; he primarily played offense.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: That the wholly ordinary Hugo Corro was able to twice decision Valdes, fairly easily, remains a point of interest. Did all the hard fights with Monzon and Briscoe catch up to Valdes, or did he simply lose his passion with Monzon out of the picture? Either way, Valdes couldn't get going against Corro, who dethroned him in April 1978 and then showed it wasn't a fluke by whipping him again seven months later.

30 FELIX TRINIDAD

Record: 41-1 (34)

Years Fought: 1990-2002

Titles Held: IBF Welterweight 1993-2000; WBA Super Welterweight 2000-'01; IBF Junior Middleweight 2000-'01; WBA Middleweight 2001

Trinidad decks Fernando Vargas in their December 2000 classic

Best Punch: Trinidad's left hook was the most dominant weapon at 147 since Thomas Hearns' right cross. He hurt guys with a good, long, straight right hand too, but even that was usually so he could get into position to launch the hook, which was almost unfailingly the punch that ended the fight. It was thrown as drawn up in the textbook: short, fast, and with full leverage, to either the body or head. When it landed cleanly, the end was near.

Greatest Knockout: A pulverizing puncher at welterweight, and maybe slightly less so at 154, there was some doubt about how Trinidad would handle 160 pounds when he jumped up to challenge

Yory Boy Campas absorbs a brutal right hand

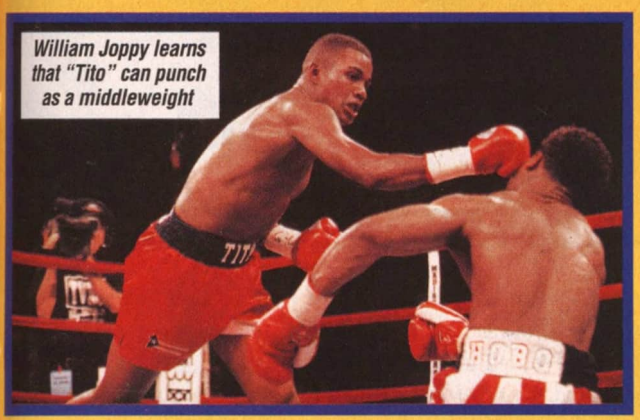
William Joppy for the WBA title in May 2001. The fears were unfounded. Trinidad never was more spectacular, smashing the once-beaten Joppy to the canvas several times early and finishing him brutally in the fifth.

Statistical Analysis: Of Trinidad's 15 successful defenses of the IBF welterweight title, 12 came by knockout, a fairly startling kayo rate of 80 percent. His overall kayo rate at 147 was 86 percent. At junior middle, it dipped slightly to 75 percent, but with a different referee in the David Reid fight, it could easily have been 100 percent.

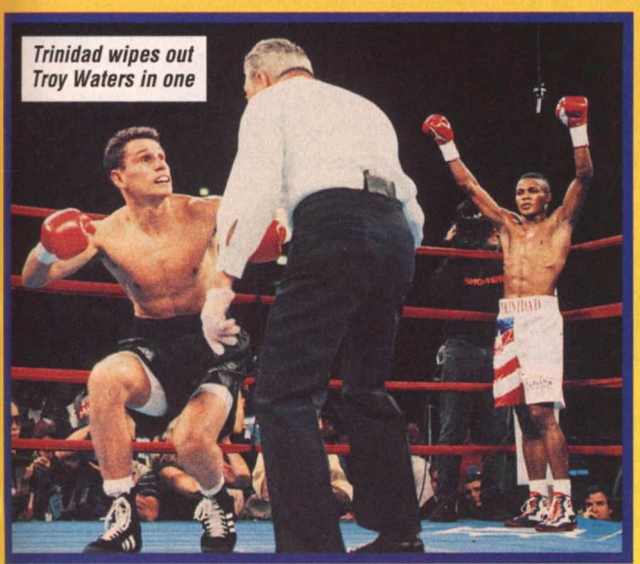
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Fighting well past his prime, multi-division former titleholder Pernell Whitaker had enough left to take a few of the early rounds against a prime Trinidad. He was outgunned and overpowered through the middle rounds, though, and was forced to use every trick he knew to last the 12-round distance. If it had been a 15-rounder, he probably wouldn't have made it.

Beyond The Punch: Trinidad's defense wasn't airtight and he was slow-footed, as Oscar De La Hoya vividly revealed in their September 1999 showdown won by Trinidad by dubious decision. He also was a terribly slow starter and many times was hurt or floored in the early rounds. He made up for a lot by being tireless, very sound mechanically, and one of his era's better bodypunchers.

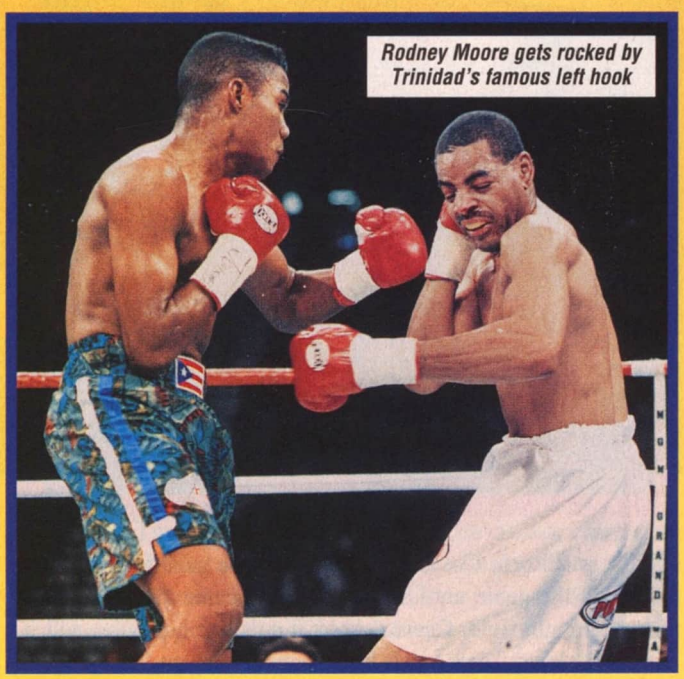
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Many thought Trinidad was too sound and hit too hard for Bernard Hopkins before they met in New York in September 2001 to unify the middleweight title. But Hopkins boxed Trinidad early, rarely let him get set to throw the hook, and wore him down with counterpunches before flattening him in the 12th round.



William Joppy learns that "Tito" can punch as a middleweight



Trinidad wipes out Troy Waters in one



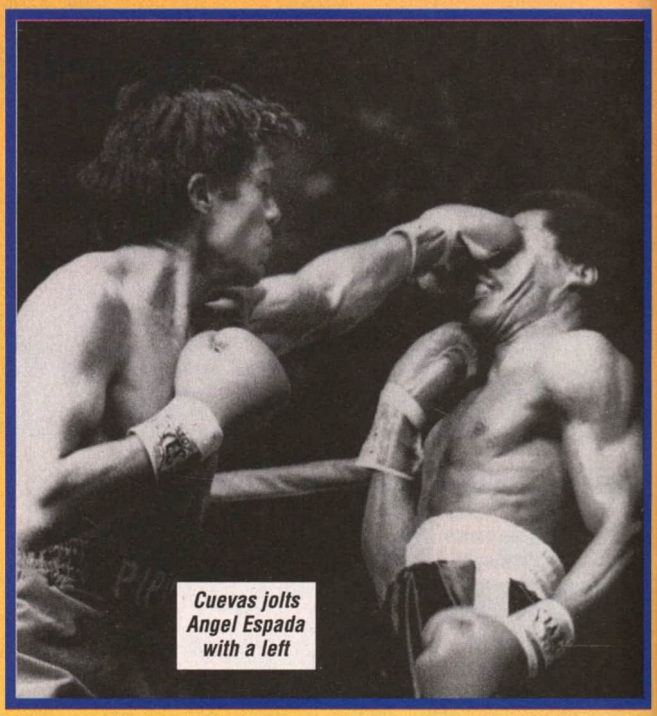
Rodney Moore gets rocked by Trinidad's famous left hook

31 PIPINO CUEVAS

Record: 35-15 (31)

Years Fought: 1971-'89

Titles Held: WBA Welterweight 1976-'80



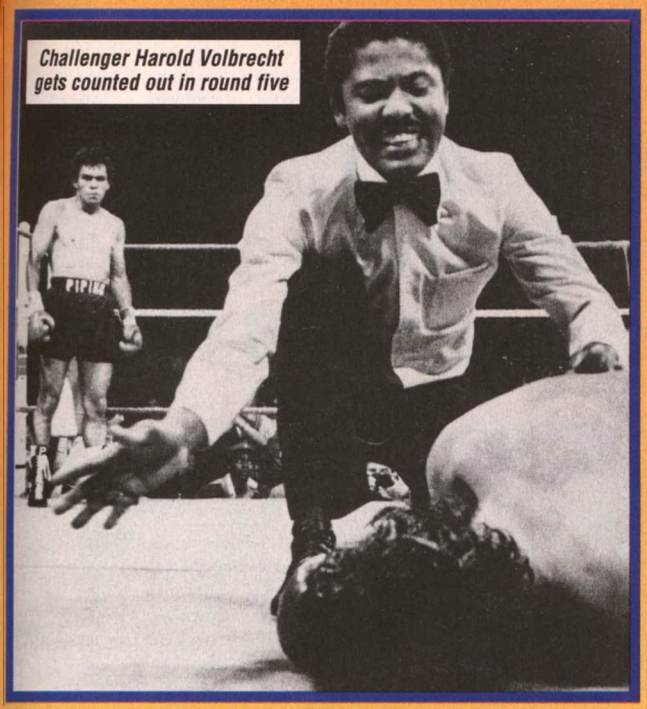
Cuevas jolts Angel Espada with a left

Best Punch: Cuevas' left hook was the most feared punch in the game until Thomas Hearns came along with his straight right. Cuevas' hook didn't just hurt guys and it didn't just knock them out. It broke bones and ripped skin and all but sent them screaming from the ring. It wasn't short and compact, and Cuevas didn't do much to set it up. Generally he got in there and started winging it. Every fight was him trying to land the hook and the other guy trying to avoid it. It took a while sometimes, but it only had to land good once.

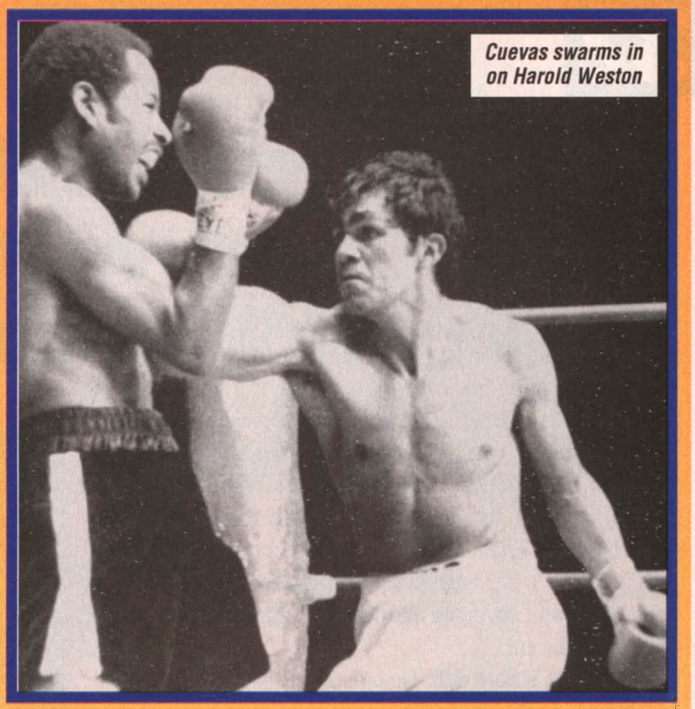
Greatest Knockout: Cuevas was a 5-1 underdog against WBA welterweight king Angel Espada in Mexicali in July 1976. He wasn't expected to last against the hardened Espada. Cuevas blew him out in the second round, decking him three times, the final time with a monstrous hook to the head. Cuevas was all of 18 years old.

Statistical Analysis: Think being a champion made Cuevas a better fighter? As a contender, he lost five of his first 12 fights and eight of his final 14. As a titleholder, he made 11 consecutive title defenses, 10 by knockout. Interestingly, after dethroning Espada in two, he also ended five of his 11 defenses in the second round.

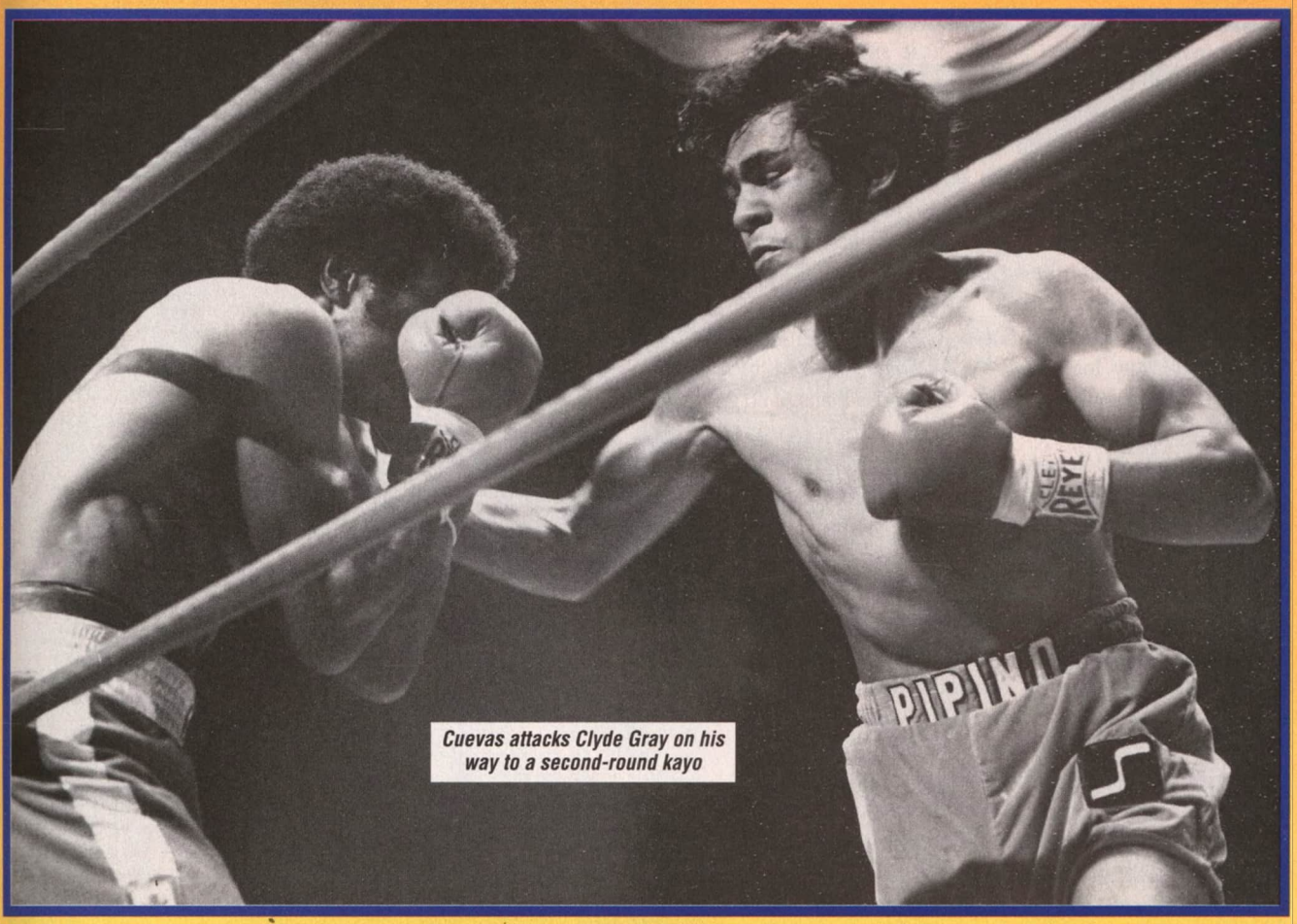
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Dead in the middle of his fearsome title reign, Cuevas couldn't take out tough California counterpuncher Randy Shields. He landed his best hooks, though not as many as he would have liked, and Shields stood in there and took them, punched back with some success, and became the only guy to challenge Cuevas and last the distance.



Challenger Harold Volbrecht gets counted out in round five



Cuevas swarms in on Harold Weston



Cuevas attacks Clyde Gray on his way to a second-round kayo

Beyond The Punch: Outside the hook and a killer attitude, there wasn't much about Cuevas that was special. He was fairly easy to hit. He was slow footed. He was crude. His hands weren't especially fast and his skills were average. But he believed in the power in his left hand, and it took him a long, long way.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Cuevas was completely outgunned and not a little intimidated when Hearns obliterated him and took the title in 1981. He landed nary a punch on Hearns and collapsed as soon as "The Hit Man" landed a pair of monster right hands in the second. Cuevas was never the same fighter afterward.

32 JIM JEFFRIES

Record: 18-1-2 (15)

Years Fought: 1896-1910

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1899-1904

Best Punch: Much has been written and said about Jeffries' overhand right, but it was a single left hook that stretched James J. Corbett in their match in 1900 and also that flattened fellow power-puncher Bob Fitzsimmons in their second meeting, in 1902. It was a big bear-swipe of a punch delivered by a guy who was stronger and tougher than perhaps any fighter of his era.

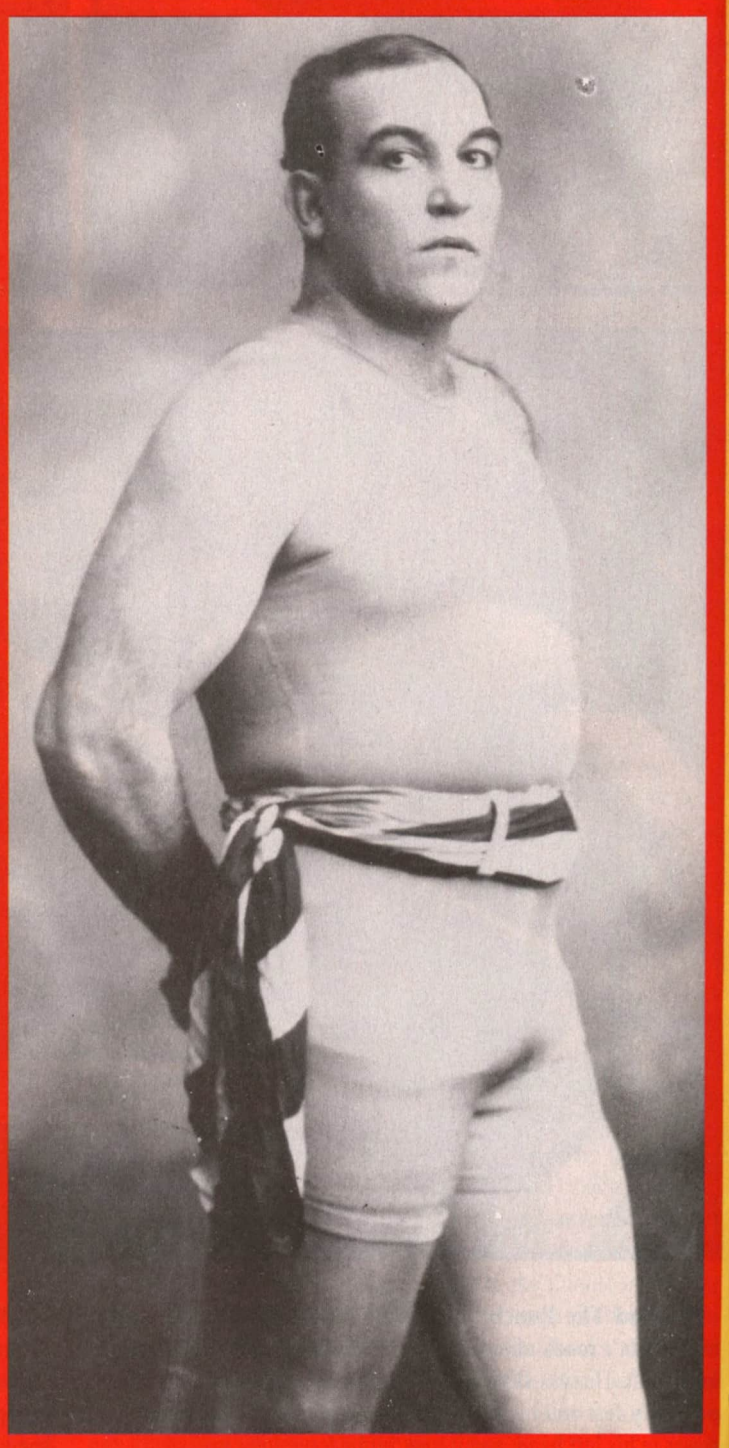
Greatest Knockout: Though 39 years old and seemingly nearing the end of his career, Fitzsimmons was battering Jeffries in their 1902 rematch. Over 7½ rounds, Fitzsimmons had broken Jeffries' nose and sliced him open over both eyes and on both cheekbones. He looked on the way to an upset win when Jeffries stepped in with a left hook in the eighth, and that suddenly, it was over.

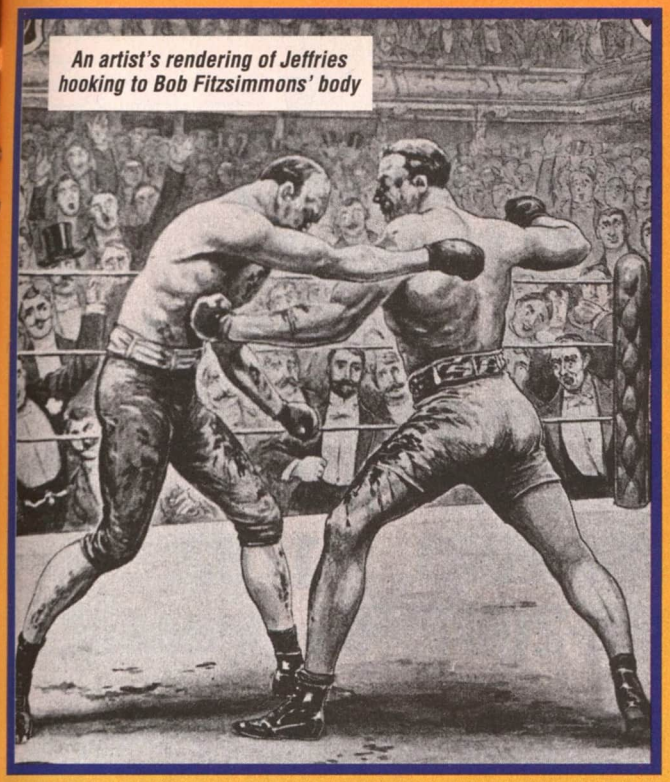
Statistical Analysis: Jeffries sports a 75 percent title fight kayo rate, and a 71 percent rate overall. As he has fewer fights than anyone in this collection, it's interesting to consider what effect a longer career might have had on his standing.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Jeffries dwarfed legendary tough guy Joe Choynski, but when they met in California in November 1897, Jeffries could manage no more than a 20-round draw. Four years later, Choynski knocked out Jack Johnson in three rounds, and consequently Jeffries hired him as a sparring partner before Jeffries' title fight with Johnson in 1910.

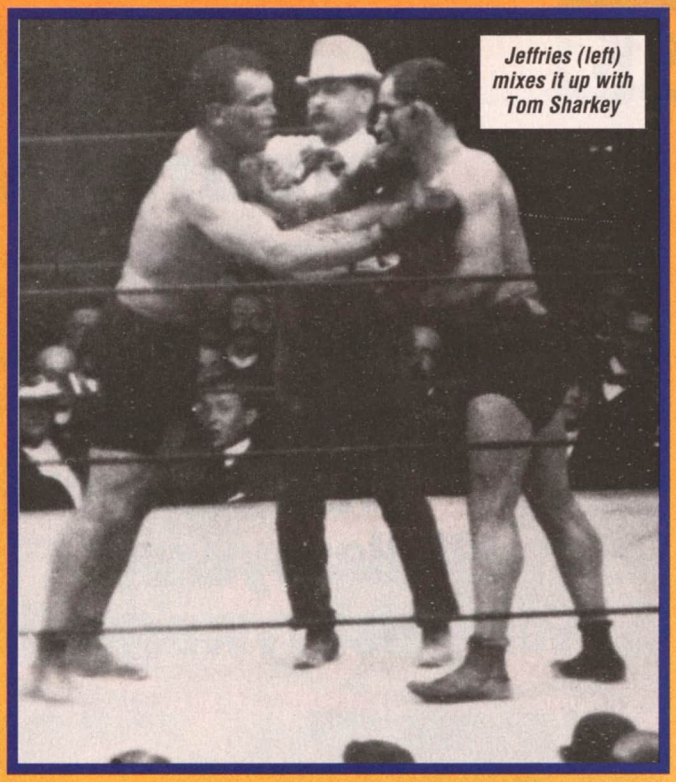
Beyond The Punch: By today's standards and even the standards of the very early-20th century, Jeffries had an unusual style: He advanced on opponents out of a low crouch, with his left arm almost fully extended and his right forearm protecting his face. It worked for him. So did an extraordinary chin, a wealth of natural physical strength that overwhelmed most opponents, and a stubborn durability that just plain wore guys out. Overall, he was a very tough assignment.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: At the time, it must have been shocking to the masses to see Jeffries so completely outclassed by Johnson in their historic 1910 title fight. He'd been indestructible in his day, but six years of easy living made him an easy target for Johnson, who was in his prime and stopped the 35-year-old Jeffries in the 15th round. It's interesting that some time afterward Jeffries told reporters that even at his best he wouldn't have beaten Johnson.

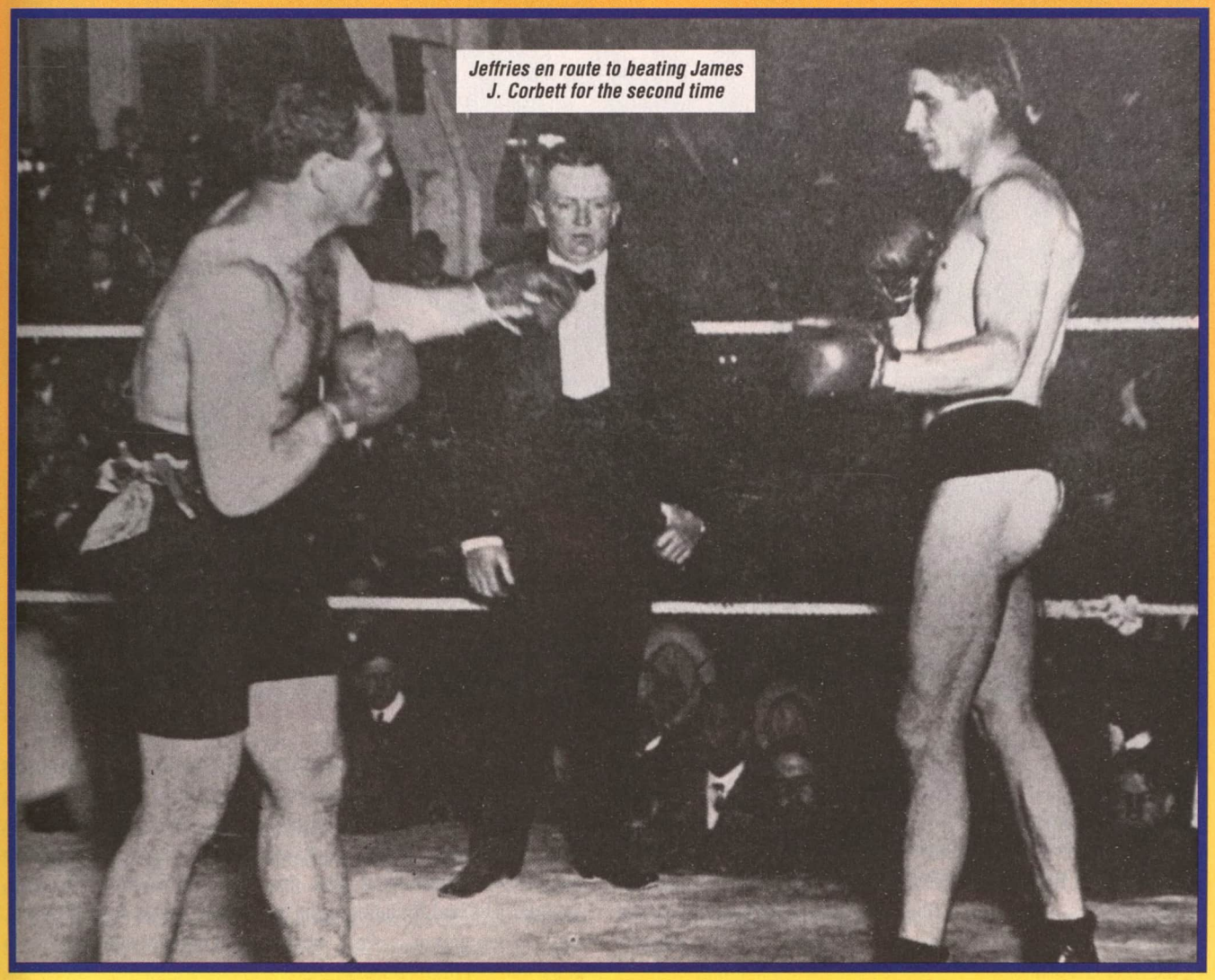




An artist's rendering of Jeffries hooking to Bob Fitzsimmons' body



Jeffries (left) mixes it up with Tom Sharkey



Jeffries en route to beating James J. Corbett for the second time

33 LENNOX LEWIS

Record: 40-2-1 (31)

Years Fought: 1989-Present

Titles Held: WBC Heavyweight 1992-'94, '97-2001, '01-present; WBA Heavyweight 1999-2000; IBF Heavyweight 1999-2001, '01-'02; World Heavyweight 1999-2001, '01-present

Mike Tyson experiences the trademark Lewis right

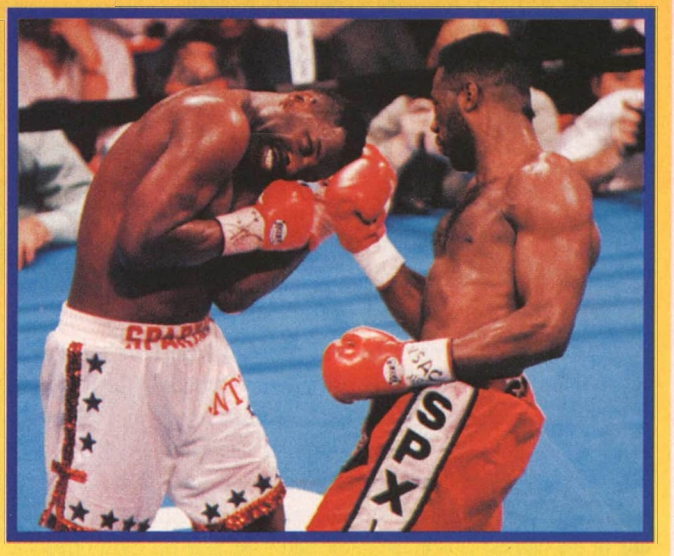
Best Punch: Lewis' overhand right has all but cleaned out the heavyweight division over the last decade. It's a mile long and lands with a thud, and when it does, 230-pound men drop like they've been pushed from a moving train. Remember the fireworks in Lewis' knockouts of Razor Ruddock, Andrew Golota, Frans Botha, Shannon Briggs, Michael Grant, and Hasim Rahman? Lewis isn't always in puncher mode. But when he is, the right is a cannon.

Greatest Knockout: It shouldn't have mattered if Lewis never fought Mike Tyson, but it did. Everyone wanted it, and it was the richest fight ever, even though by the time they got together, last June, Tyson wasn't near the fighter he was in his prime. Either way, Lewis demolished him, grinding him down with heavy, accurate jabs and thudding right hands that Tyson couldn't avoid, until, in the eighth, a final, blistering overhand right put Tyson down and out of his misery.

Lewis uses a right uppercut to beat Evander Holyfield and unify the title

The Lewis right finds Lionel Butler

Lewis annihilates Hasim Rahman in their rematch



Tony Tucker samples the right uppercut

Statistical Analysis: Over his first 39 fights, or up to and including his March 1998 kayo of Shannon Briggs, Lewis' kayo percentage was a Foremanesque 79 percent. Since the Briggs fight, or in his last nine fights, Lewis' kayo rate is a mediocre 44 percent. Blame it on two fights with Evander Holyfield and another with David Tua.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Lewis never came close to stopping the anvil-chinned Holyfield in either of their two fights. Lewis settled for a ridiculous draw in the first one, in New York in March 1999, then for a close unanimous decision in the rematch in Las Vegas eight months later.

Beyond The Punch: Lewis isn't especially exciting when boxing rather than punching, but his versatility is noteworthy. When he wants to keep guys on the end of the jab and outpoint them, he does it. It's what has helped maintain his position at the top in the face of an entirely unreliable chin and still occasionally clumsy technique.

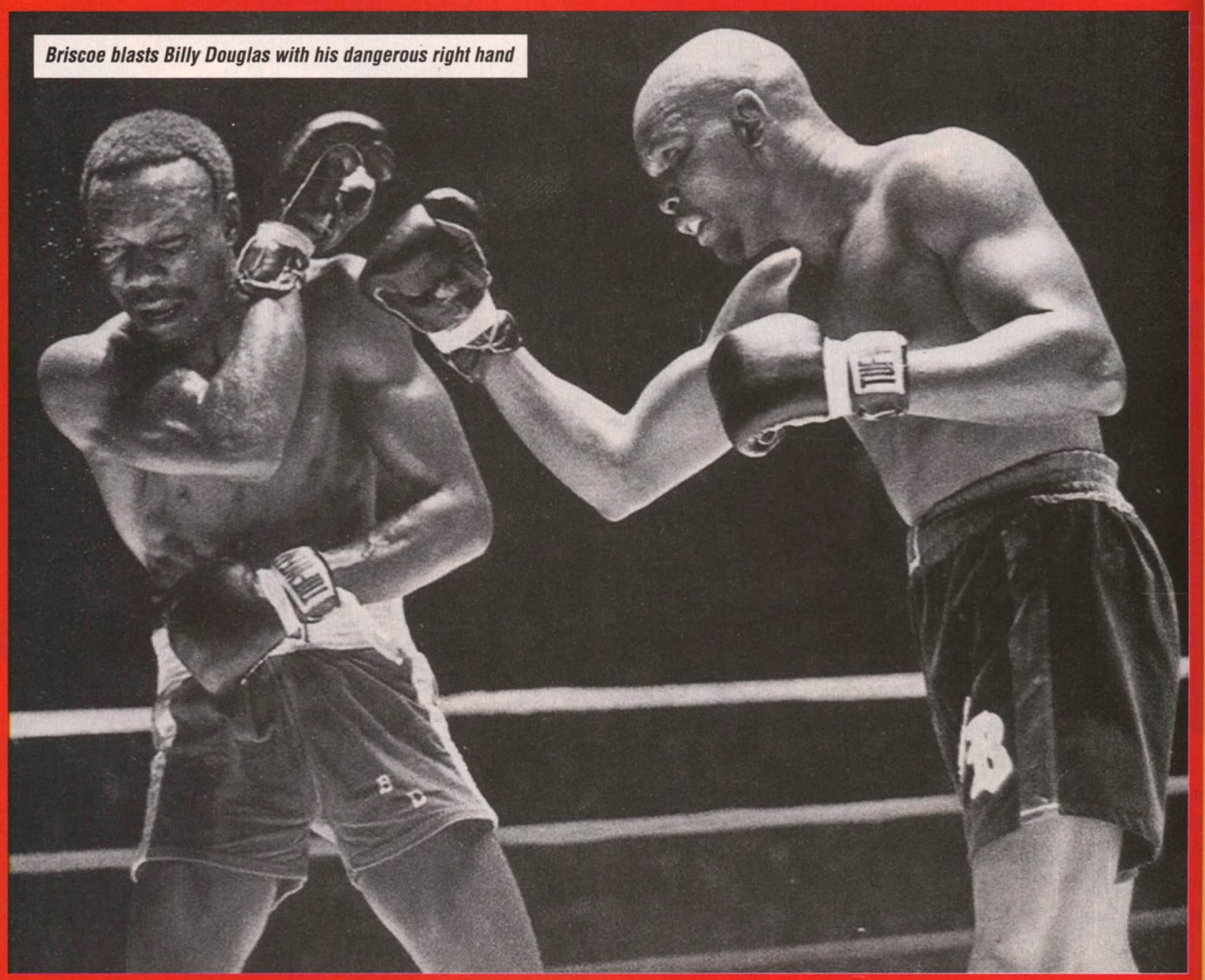
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Despite later protests to the contrary, Lewis was unmotivated, undertrained, and overconfident when he defended against Rahman in South Africa in April 2001. And he paid for it. After getting drawn into an amateurish, sloppy slugfest, a winded Lewis was pole-axed and dethroned by a single right hand in the fifth round.

34 BENNIE BRISCOE

Record: 66-24-5 (53)

Years Fought: 1962-'82

Titles Held: none



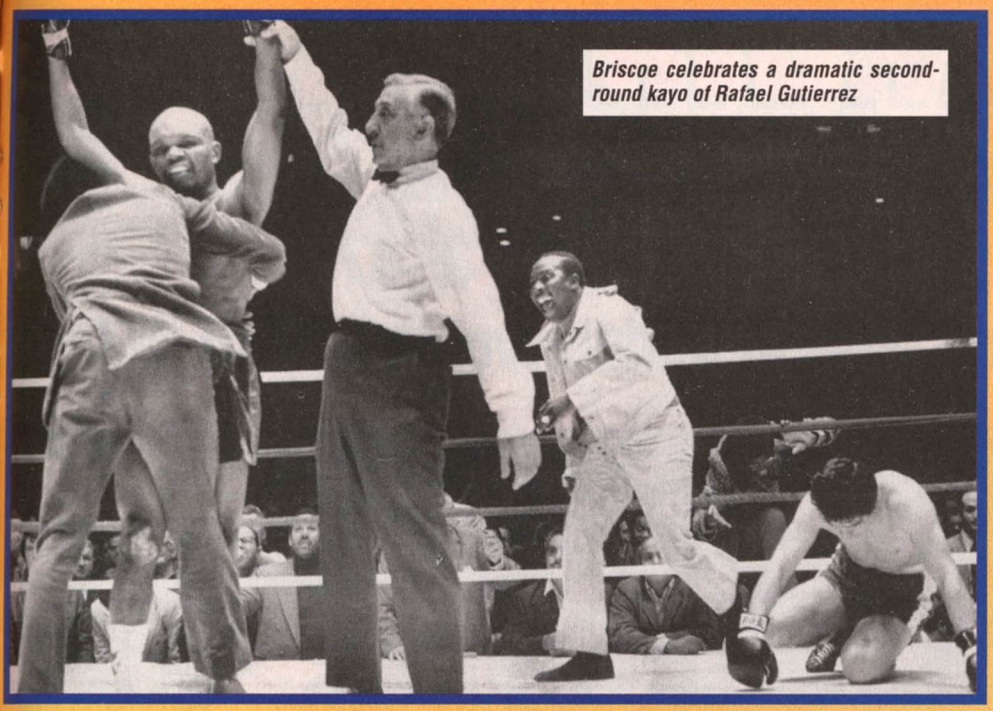
Briscoe blasts Billy Douglas with his dangerous right hand

Best Punch: When he was younger, Briscoe's hardest punch—in clear violation of the Philadelphia fighter's code—was his straight right. He threw a hell of a left hook, too, but the right was harder. He threw it wherever he could land it: the jaw, the side, the back, if the opening was there. It was a killer. Later, after George Benton started training him, Briscoe developed one of the hardest jabs in the game and it became his most effective weapon.

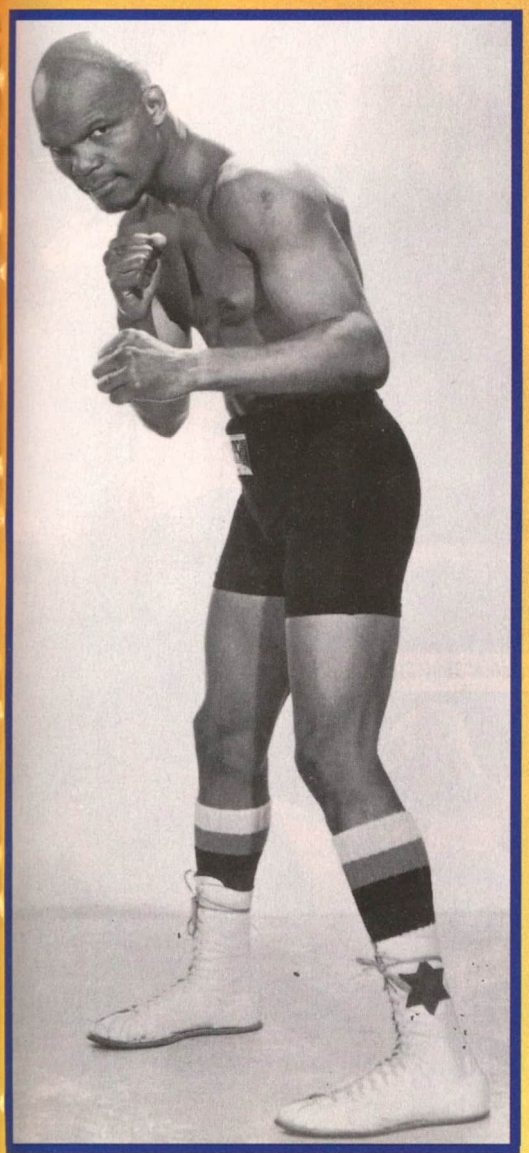
Greatest Knockout: Up-and-coming Australian middleweight Tony Mundine was being groomed for a shot at champion Carlos Monzon when Briscoe was brought over to Paris to lose. The plan was for Mundine to get in one more win before challenging Monzon in a big-money fight. Someone forgot beforehand to tell Briscoe, who overwhelmed Mundine and stopped him in the fifth round.

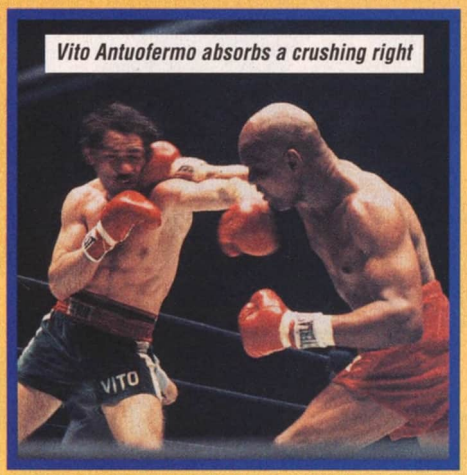
Statistical Analysis: A full 10 of Briscoe's 24 losses, or 42 percent, came after his 34th birthday, dropping his career kayo percentage from 62 percent down to the 56 percent he ended up with. And here's an oddity: Four of Briscoe's five career draws came during a nine-fight stretch that ran from April '75 to December '76.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Briscoe had three chances against fellow power-puncher Rodrigo Valdes and simply couldn't get past him. Between 1973 and '77, Valdes decisioned him twice

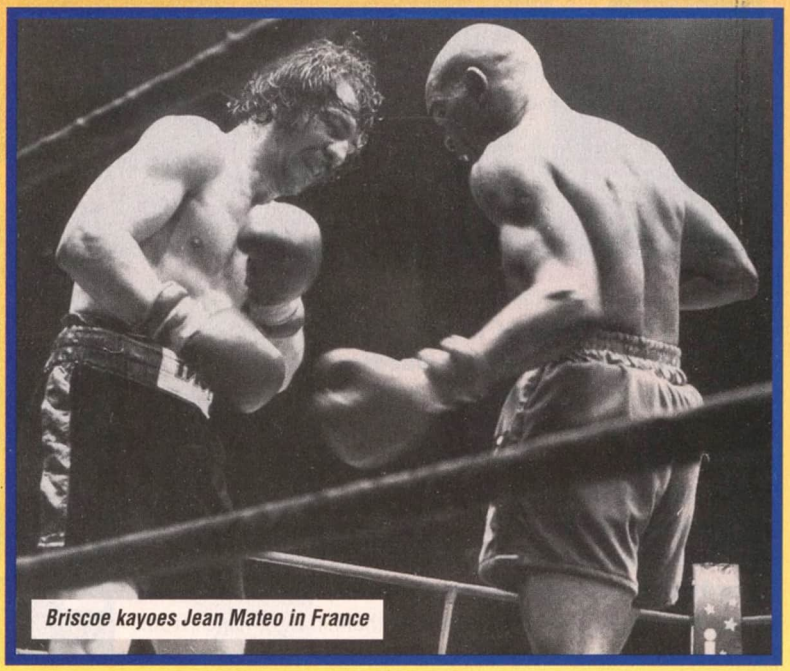


Briscoe celebrates a dramatic second-round kayo of Rafael Gutierrez





Vito Antuofermo absorbs a crushing right



Briscoe kayoes Jean Mateo in France

and, in Briscoe's only career stoppage loss, knocked him out in seven rounds in Monte Carlo. Two out of the three fights were for the WBC middleweight title.

Beyond The Punch: If Briscoe couldn't take you out with one shot, he was just as happy to break you down round after round. He liked to rough guys up on the inside with his shoulders and that hard, bald head and he wasn't above breaking the rules. One of his favorite moves was to throw a roundhouse, eye-catching hook to an opponent's head and then get him with an uppercut below the belt.

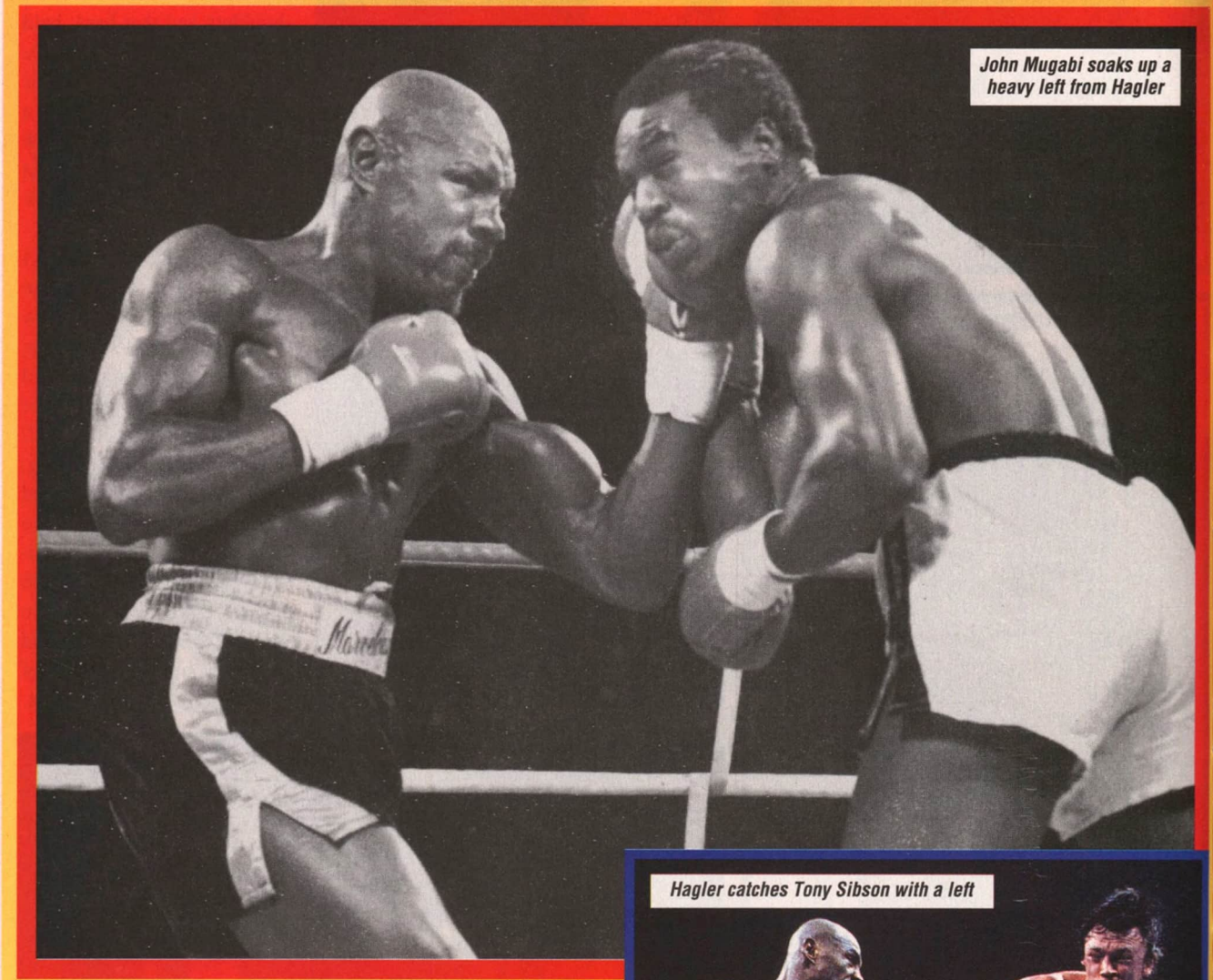
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Briscoe held the great Carlos Monzon to a draw in Argentina in 1967, so he was given by many a good chance to beat Monzon in the rematch in November '72. Briscoe pressed all night long, made Monzon work hard, and hurt him with a right in the ninth. But he never could consistently get past Monzon's jab and straight right hands. He was outboxed most rounds and ended up on the wrong end of a lopsided unanimous decision.

35 MARVIN HAGLER

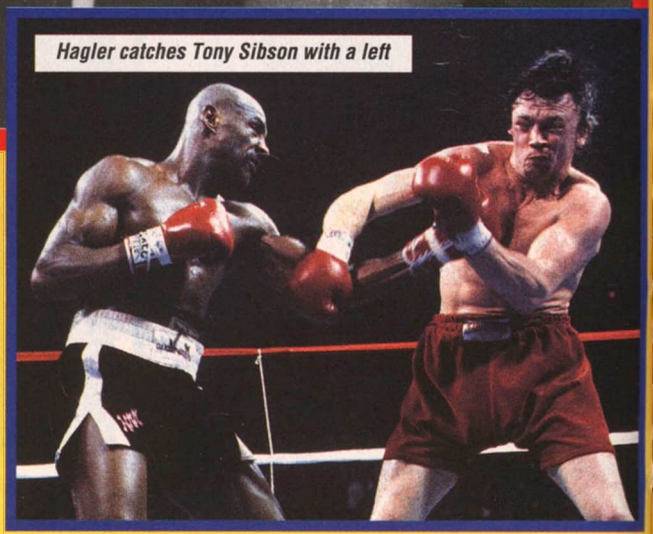
Record: 62-3-2 (52)

Years Fought: 1973-'87

Titles Held: World Middleweight 1980-'87



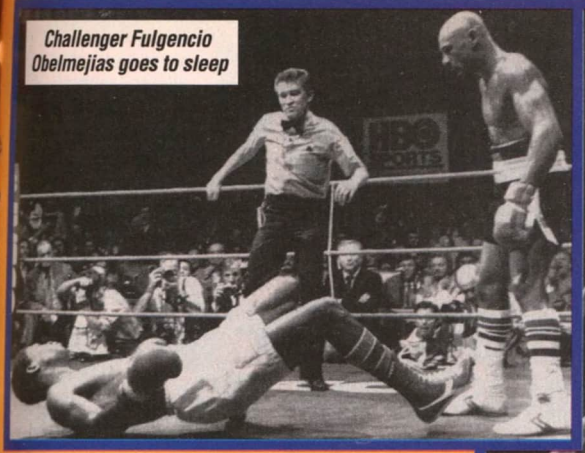
John Mugabi soaks up a heavy left from Hagler



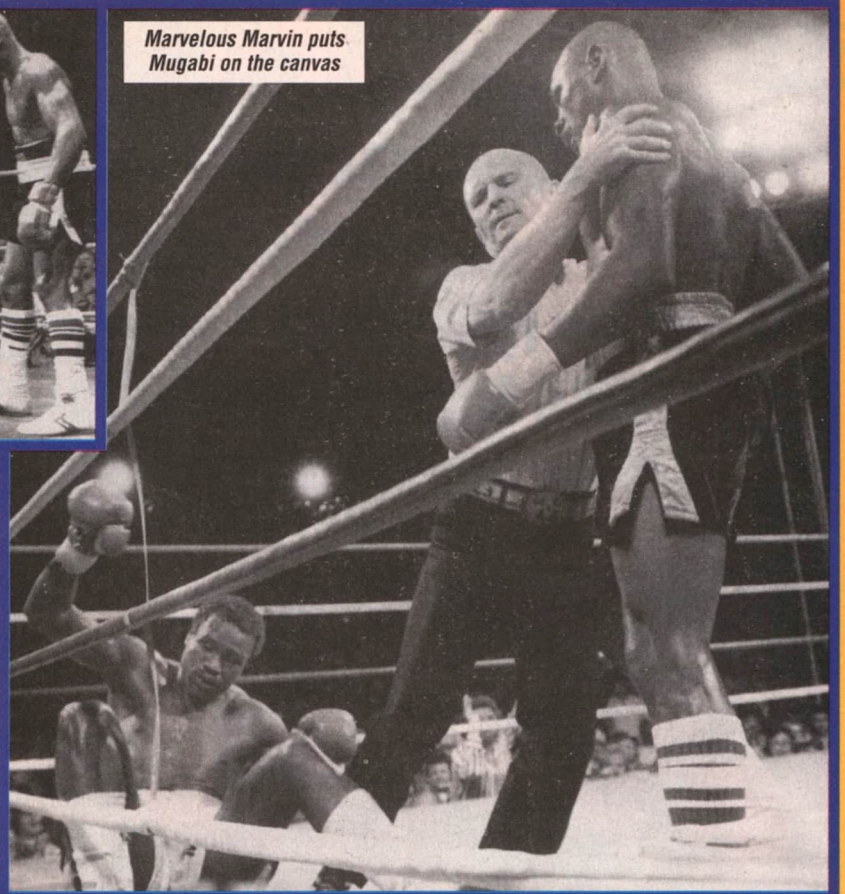
Hagler catches Tony Sibson with a left

Best Punch: Some of Hagler's most famous knockouts came from the right cross thrown from an orthodox stance, but his right hook, when he was fighting as a southpaw, was the one to watch for. It was that punch that hurt Mustafa Hamsho more than any other and that sliced up Vito Antuofermo and staggered Ray Leonard and nearly decapitated Tony Sibson and Fulgencio Obelmejias.

Greatest Knockout: In one of the great middleweight title fights, Hagler outslugged Thomas Hearns in April 1985 in Las Vegas, Nevada. He had to weather some hellish right hands from Hearns to do it, not to mention a bad cut. But he gritted his teeth,



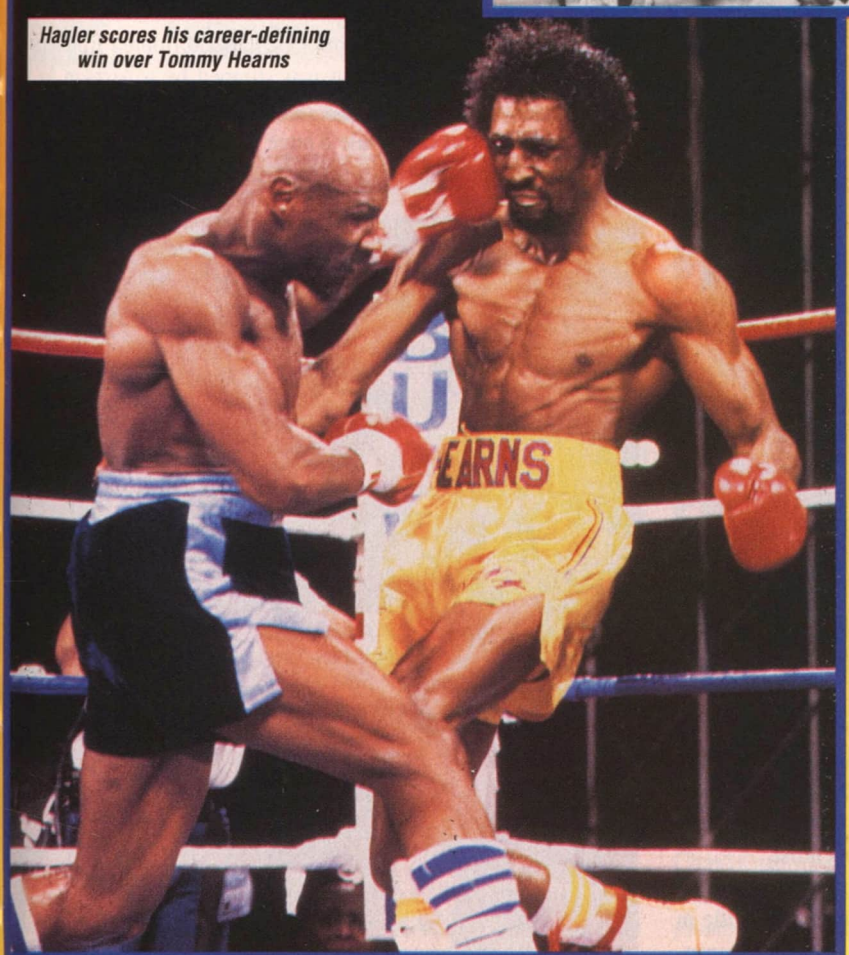
Challenger Fulgencio Obelmejias goes to sleep



Marvelous Marvin puts Mugabi on the canvas

punched through the blood and the mayhem, and stopped an exhausted Hearns in the third with a pair of leaping rights. It was the fight that made him a superstar.

Statistical Analysis: Apparently, Hagler was a much better puncher in rematches. He drew with Antuofermo, then stopped him in five; he stopped Obelmejias in eight, then in five; and he stopped Hamsho in 11 the first time and in three the second time. He also avenged decision losses to both Willie Monroe and Bobby Watts with knockout wins.



Hagler scores his career-defining win over Tommy Hearns

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Few would have given any former lightweight champion a chance to take Hagler the full 15, but the great Roberto Duran did just that in their showdown in November 1983 in Las Vegas. It was better even than that—countering with quick right hands and frustrating Hagler inside, Duran led on the cards after 13 rounds. Hagler, a 4-1 favorite, had to rally hard over the last two to take the decision.

Beyond The Punch: Early in his career Hagler was more boxer-puncher than puncher, with good legs, reasonably fast hands, and excellent technique. He could fight going backward as well as forward. It wasn't until he got older and slower that he became the hardened puncher that many recall now, as reliant on his iron chin as on his iron punch.

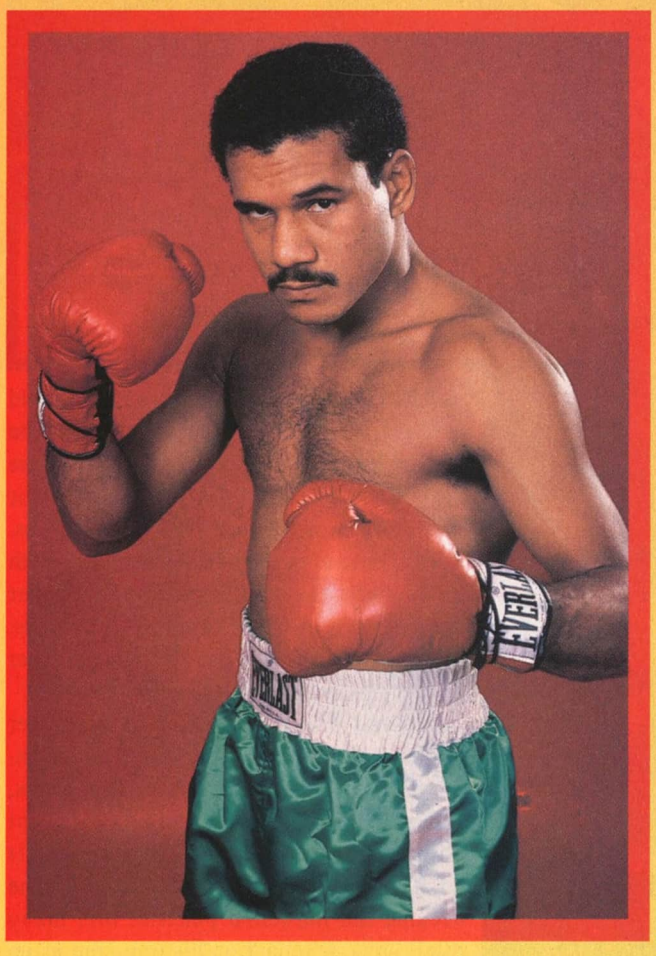
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Hagler could have used younger legs and lighter gloves and a smaller ring against Ray Leonard in their title fight in April 1987. But he gave those away figuring he'd whip Leonard easily, and then he overtrained. Many still think he deserved the decision, but you can't overestimate the power of charisma, fast hands, and chutzpah. Leonard had all three in spades.

36 EDWIN ROSARIO

Record: 43-6 (37)

Years Fought: 1979-'97

Titles Held: WBC Lightweight 1983-'84; WBA Lightweight 1986-'87, '89-'90; WBA Junior Welterweight 1991-'92



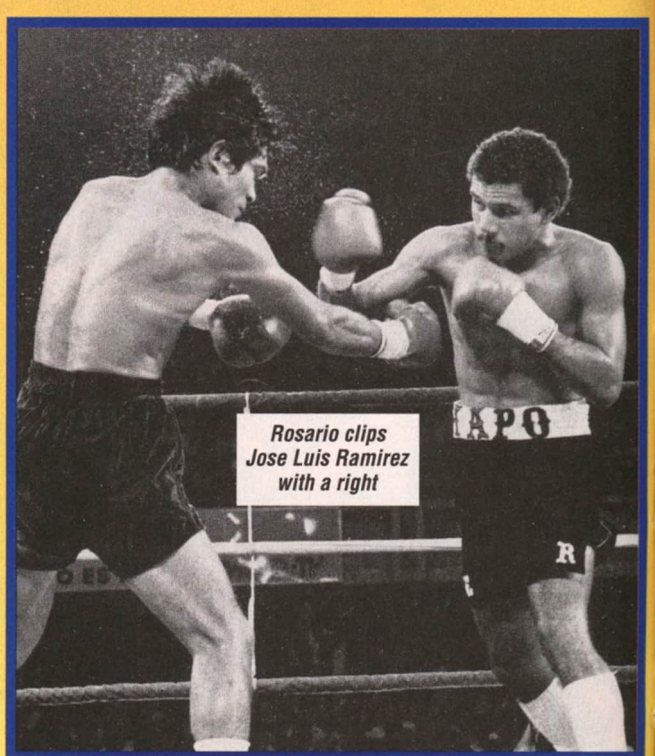
Best Punch: Hector Camacho will tell you Rosario had a hell of a left hook—it was the hook first that changed Camacho forever in their showdown in New York in 1986. But it was Rosario's right cross that was a fight-stopper just about whenever he landed it flush. Rosario threw it with the nonchalant air of a guy taking out his garbage, but it flattened lightweights and a few junior welterweights, too, at an alarming pace and with sudden finality. It made Rosario a true, legitimate one-punch knockout artist.

Greatest Knockout: Rosario was a 7-2 underdog when he challenged Livingstone Bramble for the WBA lightweight title in September 1986. After a slow first round, he rattled the iron-chinned Bramble with a hook early in the second. A minute later, he detonated a bomb of a right hand on Bramble's jaw, and Bramble dropped flat to the canvas.

Statistical Analysis: Rosario's chin was as weak as his blows were potent. Five of his six career losses, or 83 percent, were by knockout. Conversely, 86 percent of his career wins were by kayo, and his overall kayo rate was a healthy 76 percent.

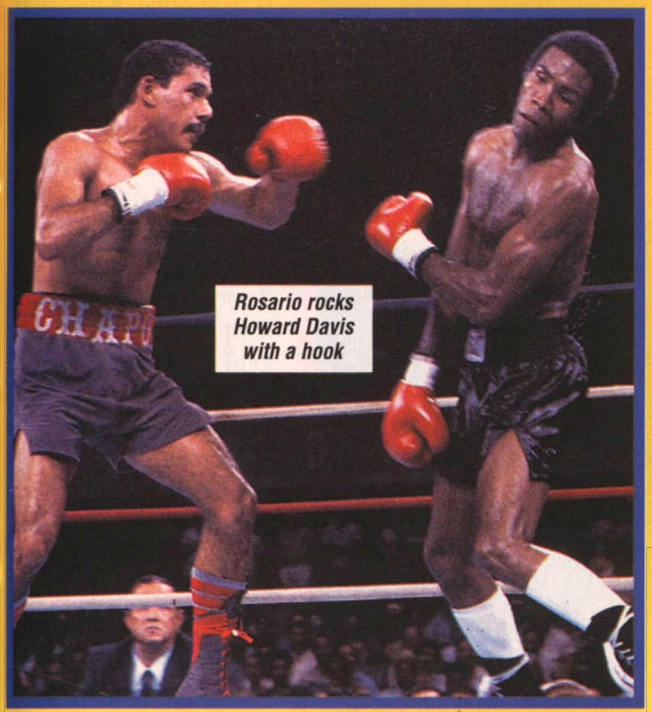
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Rosario's rivalry with tough-as-a rock Jose Luis Ramirez was bizarre. In the first match, held in Puerto Rico in May 1983, Rosario started fast, faded late, and barely hung on to capture a controversial decision to claim the WBC title. In the rematch in November '84, Rosario floored Ramirez in the first and second rounds but was stopped by a barrage in the fourth.

Beyond The Punch: While a huge puncher with often pristine technique, Rosario had an undependable chin and could be

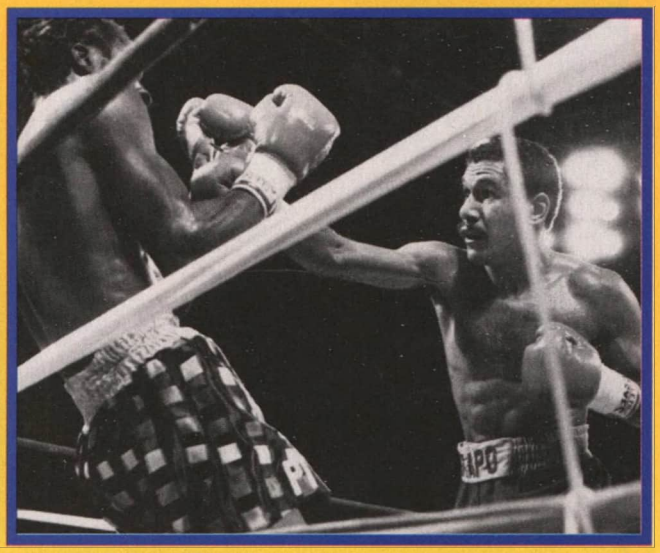


Rosario clips Jose Luis Ramirez with a right

Edwin Viruet takes a nasty fall in the third round



Rosario rocks Howard Davis with a hook



"El Chapo" shocks Livingstone Bramble in round two

accused of being a front-runner. If you could hurt him and get a jump on him on the cards and back him up, you stood a good chance of licking him.

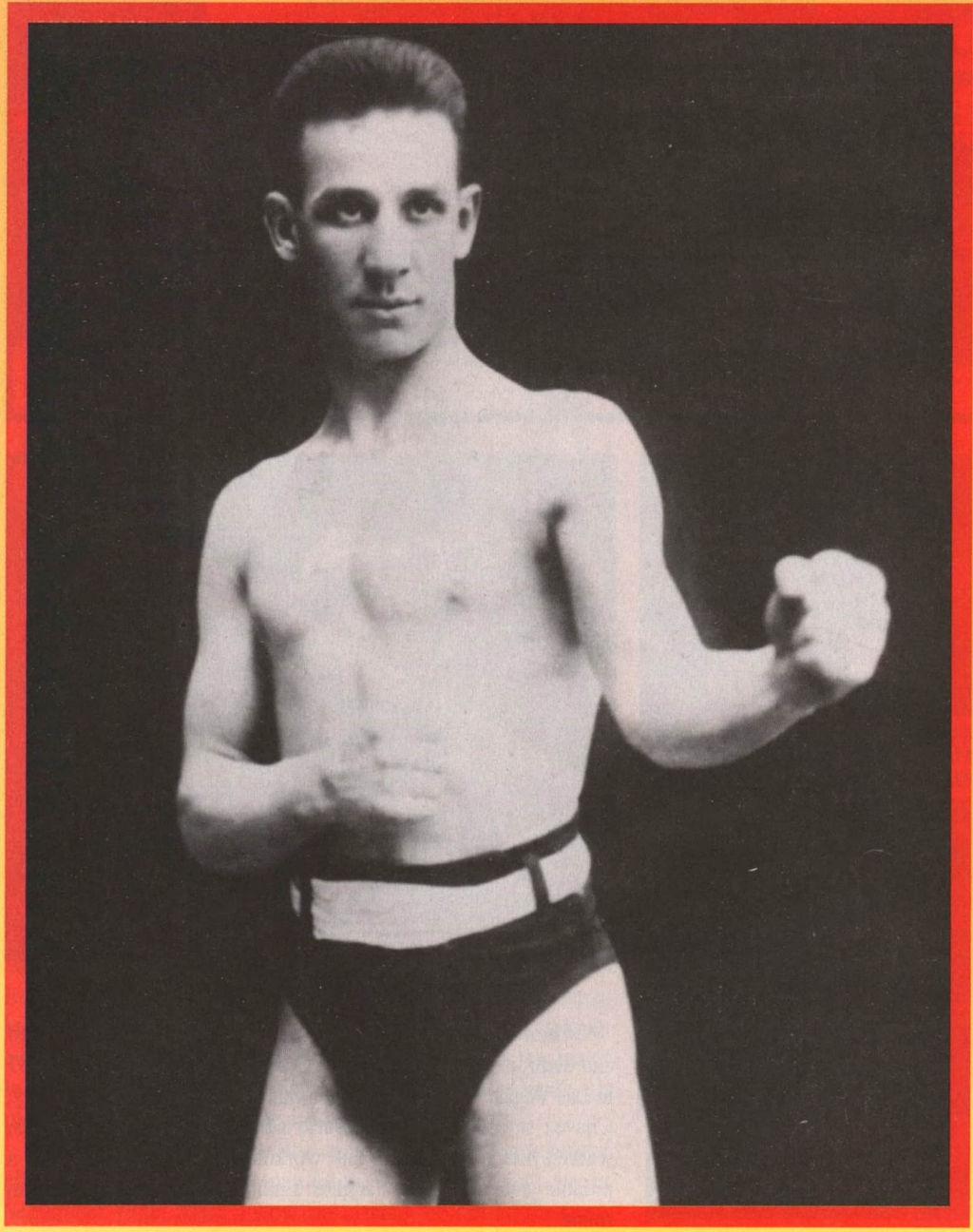
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Rosario was brutalized and dethroned by the great Julio Cesar Chavez in November 1987 in Las Vegas. With a granite chin that already was near legendary, Chavez stormed through Rosario's best right hands and hooks, walked him to the ropes, and worked him over. Rosario was a pitiable sight when the slaughter finally was stopped in the 11th round.

37 TOMMY RYAN

Record: 86-3-6 (68)
with 4 no-decisions & 6 no-contests

Years Fought: 1887-1907

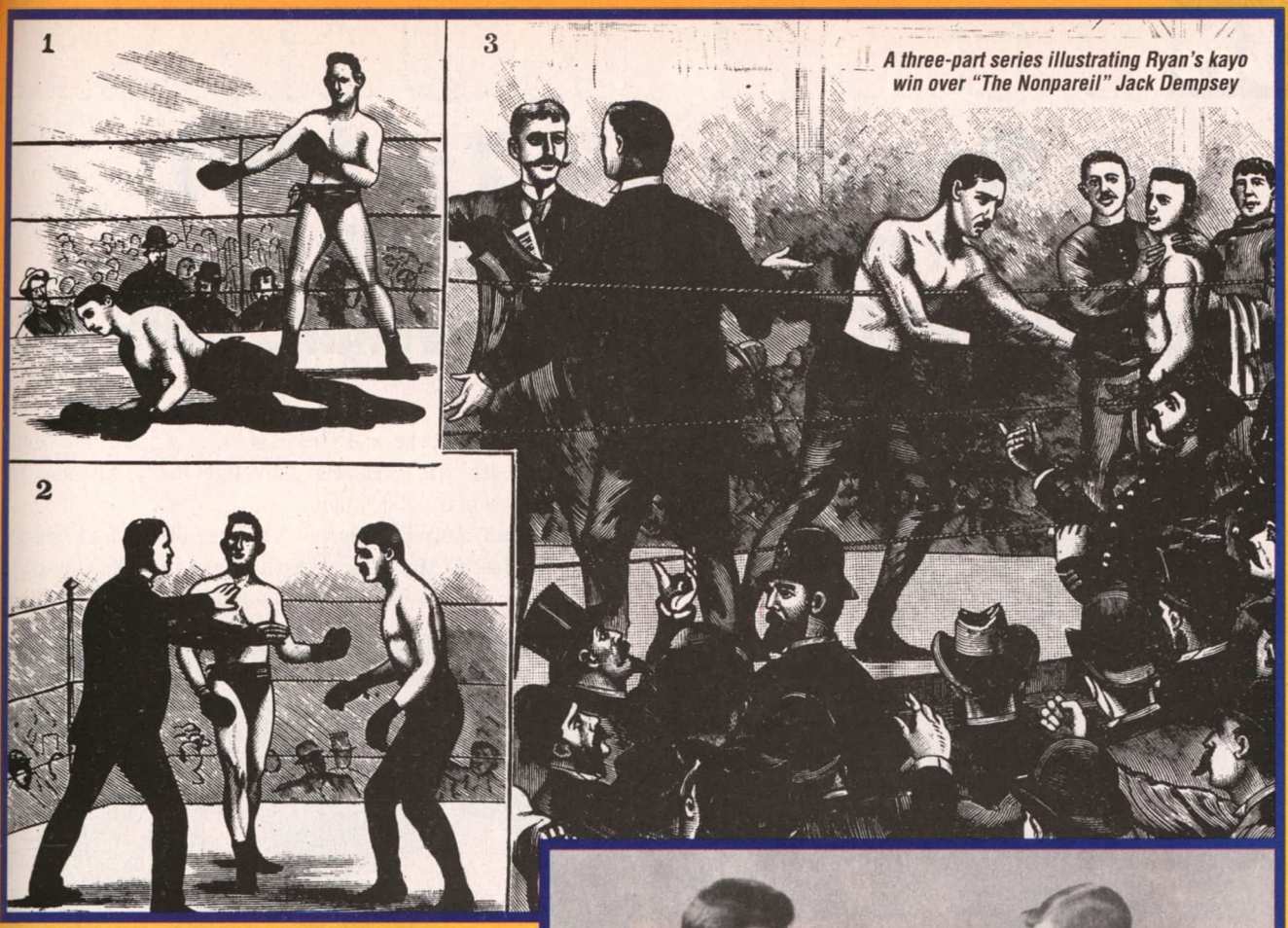
Titles Held: World Welterweight 1894-'98; World Middleweight 1898-1907



Best Punch: Ryan was a two-fisted boxer-puncher who hurt guys with both hands. He went to the body and the head with equal skill and was so adept scientifically that he tutored James J. Corbett and Jim Jeffries at various times during their careers. But every great puncher has a favorite punch, and Ryan's was the overhand right.

Greatest Knockout: Shortly after winning the world welterweight title, Ryan destroyed "The Nonpareil" Jack Dempsey in three one-sided rounds in January 1895 in New York. Dempsey, who never fought again, had been the middleweight champion for seven years until dethroned by future heavyweight king Bob Fitzsimmons. Ryan, Fitzsimmons, and George LaBlanche were the only fighters to stop Dempsey over a 12-year, 67-fight career.

Statistical Analysis: Ryan stopped 17 of his first 18 opponents and 17 of his final 21, but the majority of his kayo streaks were less than five fights long.

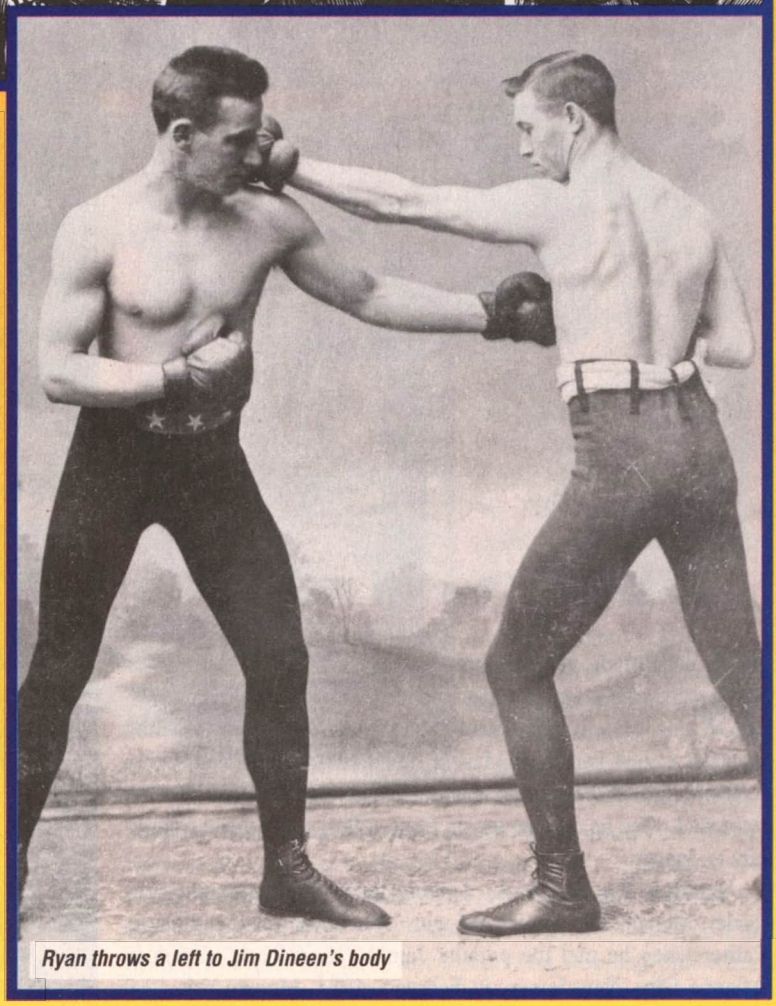


A three-part series illustrating Ryan's kayo win over "The Nonpareil" Jack Dempsey

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: "Mysterious" Billy Smith was known to be one of the dirtiest and toughest fighters of the era. He and Ryan fought five times over the course of three years. Ryan won a 20-round decision in Minnesota in July 1894 and also won by ninth-round disqualification in November '96 in New York. There were two six-round draws, and an 18-round draw in '95 in New York that was stopped by the local police, presumably because it was criminally brutal even by late 19th-century standards.

Beyond The Punch: Ryan was no mere slugger. The fight intelligentsia praised him as one of the cleverest and most intelligent fighters of his era and as an all-time great. He was quick-footed, fundamentally sound for the day, and a murderous hitter. By all accounts, he was, for the period, flawless.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: According to the lore, Ryan took great delight in pummeling sparring partner Kid McCoy, who would grow one day into a great puncher himself. After repeated beatings McCoy silently vowed revenge, and years later, in March 1896, he convinced his former employer that he was ill and desperately needed the money a fight with Ryan would bring. Ryan fell for it, hardly trained for the fight, and was knocked out in the 15th round. It was the only stoppage loss of his career.



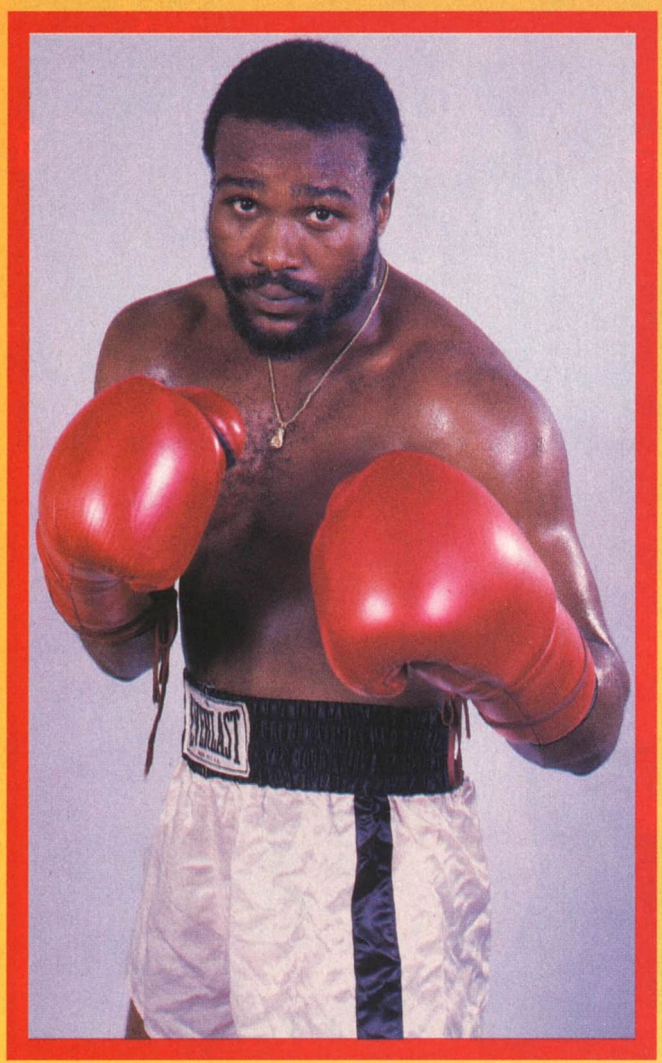
Ryan throws a left to Jim Dineen's body

38 JOHN MUGABI

Record: 42-7-1 (39)

Years Fought: 1980-'99

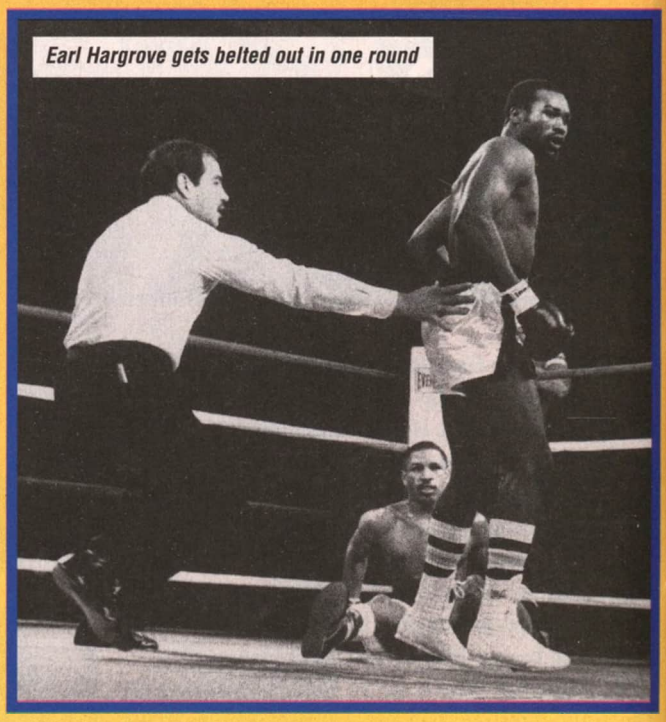
Titles Held: WBC Super Welterweight, 1989-'90



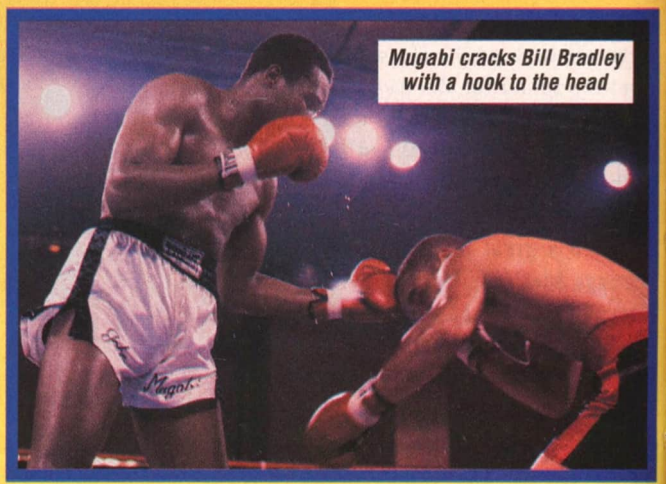
Best Punch: Mugabi threw his overhand right like he was throwing a grenade and it landed with roughly the equivalent force. It was a debilitating, often times incapacitating bomb of a right hand that Mugabi rarely attempted to veil with a feint or a jab. There was no need to. Sooner or later he'd land the right, and when he did, the guy in front of him would be in front of him no longer.

Greatest Knockout: As a rising junior middleweight contender, Mugabi was coming off wins over Eddie Gazo and Curtis Parker when he met the popular James "Hard Rock" Green in Atlantic City, New Jersey, in February 1984. Mugabi was 19-0 with 19 stops, and he and Green went at it hard in a brutal slugfest. Mugabi was taken deep into a fight for the first time, but stopped Green in the 10th round.

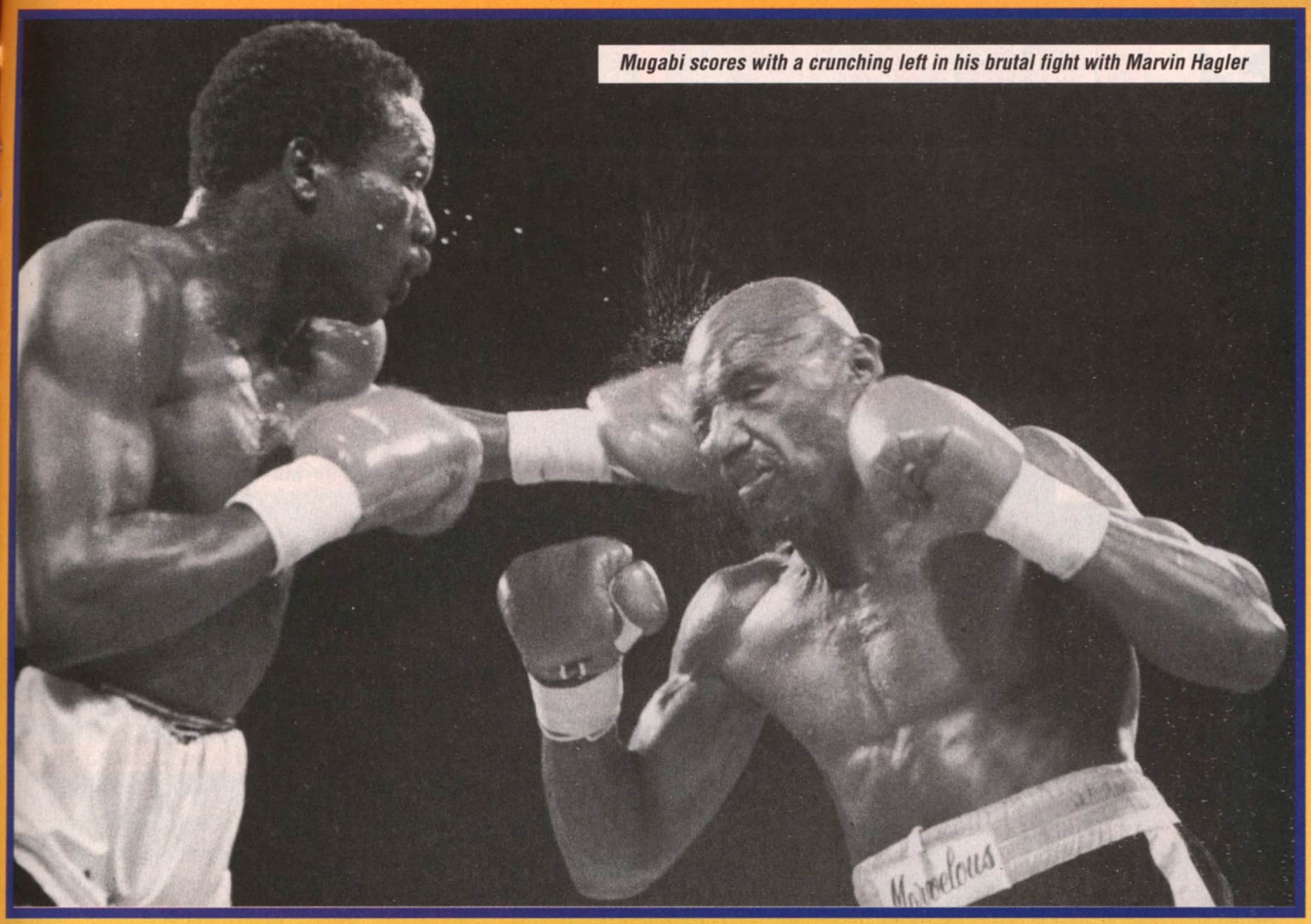
Statistical Analysis: Mugabi's kayo rate dropped precipitously after his loss to Marvelous Marvin Hagler in 1986. Going into that fight he was 25-0 (25)—a kayo rate of 100 percent. Post-



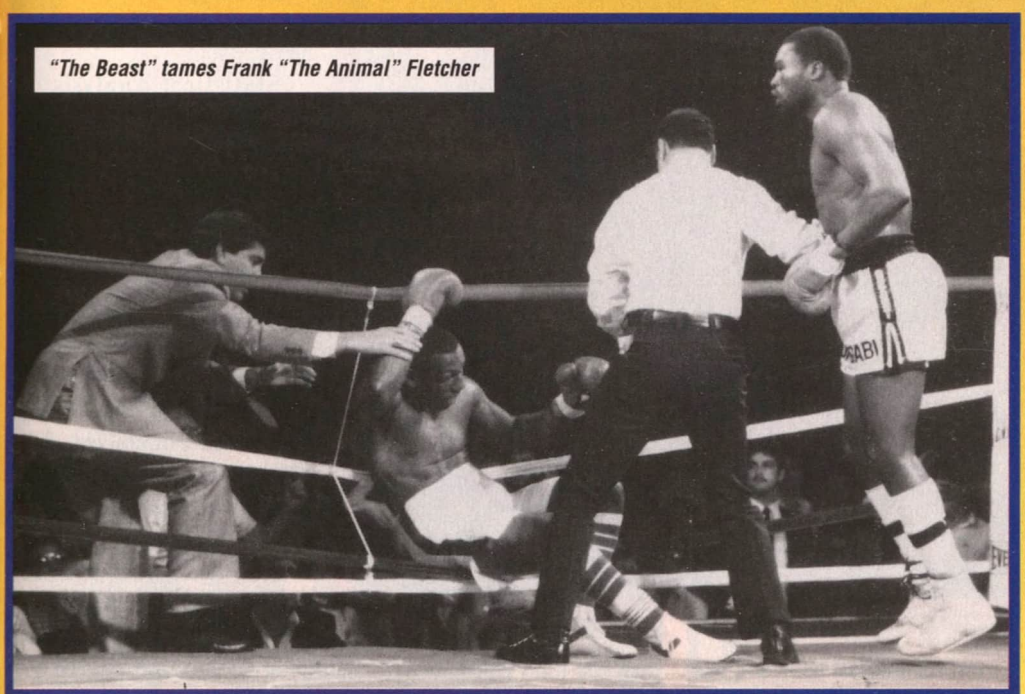
Earl Hargrove gets belted out in one round



Mugabi cracks Bill Bradley with a hook to the head



Mugabi scores with a crunching left in his brutal fight with Marvin Hagler



"The Beast" tames Frank "The Animal" Fletcher

Hagler, his record was 17-6-1 with 14 knockouts, a kayo rate of just 58 percent. Also, six of Mugabi's seven losses were by kayo, two of them in the first round. And at the time of his initial retirement in '91 (a retirement that lasted five years), all 42 of his pro bouts had ended in knockouts, one way of the other.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Mugabi hit Marvelous Marvin Hagler with everything he had in their slugfest in Las Vegas in March 1986. Hagler, with his head of granite, gritted his teeth, soaked up all that thunder, and wore Mugabi down, eventually stopping him in the 11th round.

Beyond The Punch: Mugabi was all puncher. He overcommitted on offense and really on every punch. There was very little about him that was subtle. His plan was to land the right hand. If he couldn't or if the other guy could take it, he was in trouble. Despite the high number of kayo losses on his record, Mugabi had a reasonably sturdy chin that became less so as he aged.

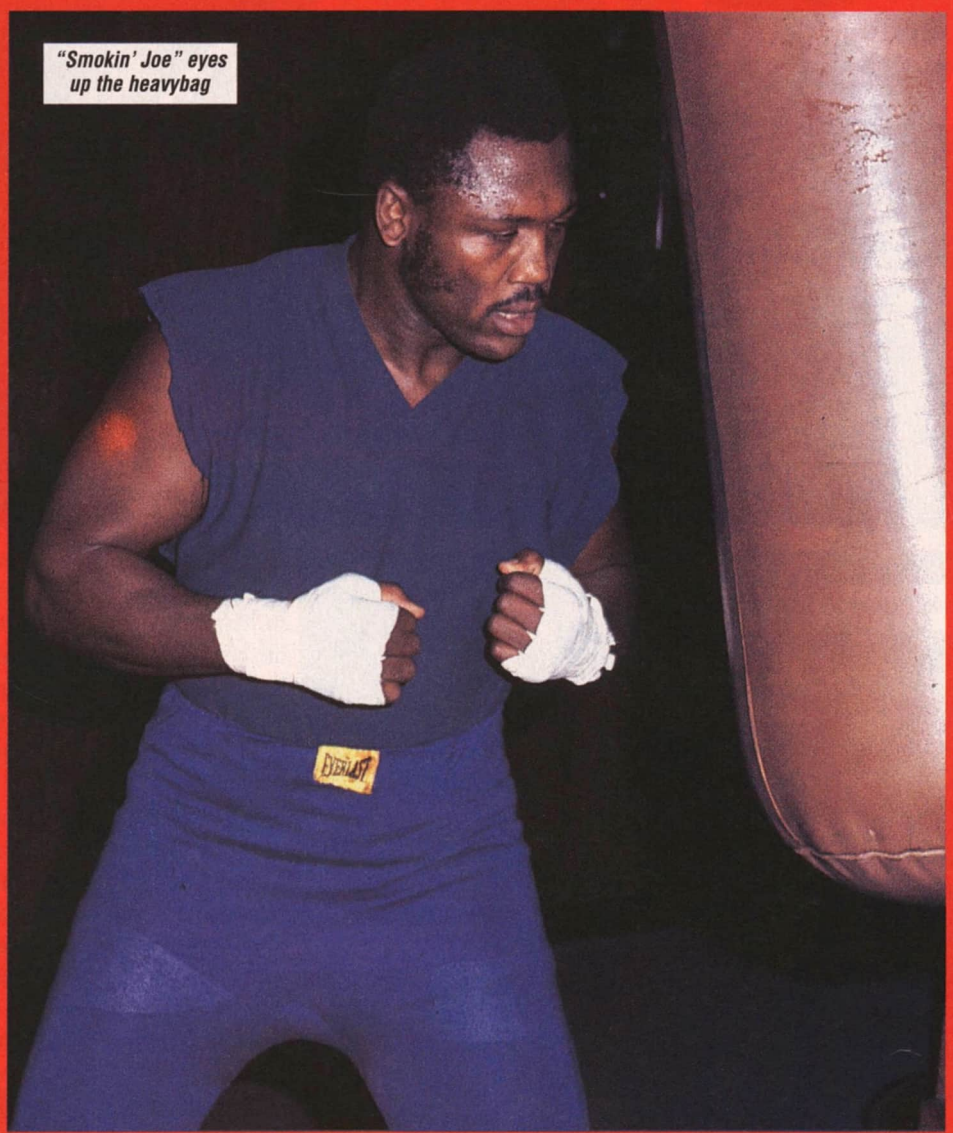
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Mugabi put together a modest kayo streak over "B"-list fighters after the loss to Hagler and then a freak stoppage loss to Duane Thomas. He had a chance to get back to the top against talented but soft-chinned Terry Norris in March 1990. But Norris got to him first, nailing him with a right and stopping him before Mugabi could even land a punch.

39 JOE FRAZIER

Record: 32-4-1 (27)

Years Fought: 1965-'81

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1970-'73



"Smokin' Joe" eyes up the heavybag

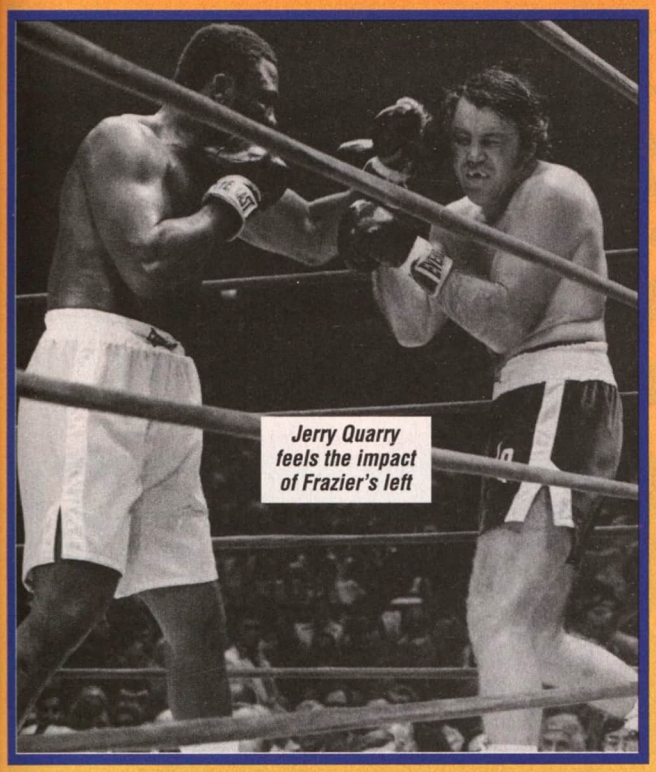
Best Punch: Frazier's is the most famous left hook and possibly the most famous single punch in boxing history. That it was his only serious offensive weapon makes the success it spawned all the more impressive. The jab was negligible, the right hand more of a swat than anything and only marginally effective as a bodypunch. Really, every other punch was a diversion. Every guy Frazier got in with knew the hook was the punch to watch for, and still most of them couldn't do a thing to get out of its way. Frazier's hook made him the best one-handed fighter in heavyweight history.

Greatest Knockout: WBA titlist Jimmy Ellis had been floored but once in his career when he took on Frazier for the undisputed title in New York in 1970. For the first couple of rounds, Ellis did well. Then Frazier's hook started landing, and Ellis quickly fell apart. A pair of leaping hooks hurt Ellis badly, and the followups drove him violently to the canvas. Angelo Dundee, Ellis' trainer, stopped it. He'd seen all he needed to.

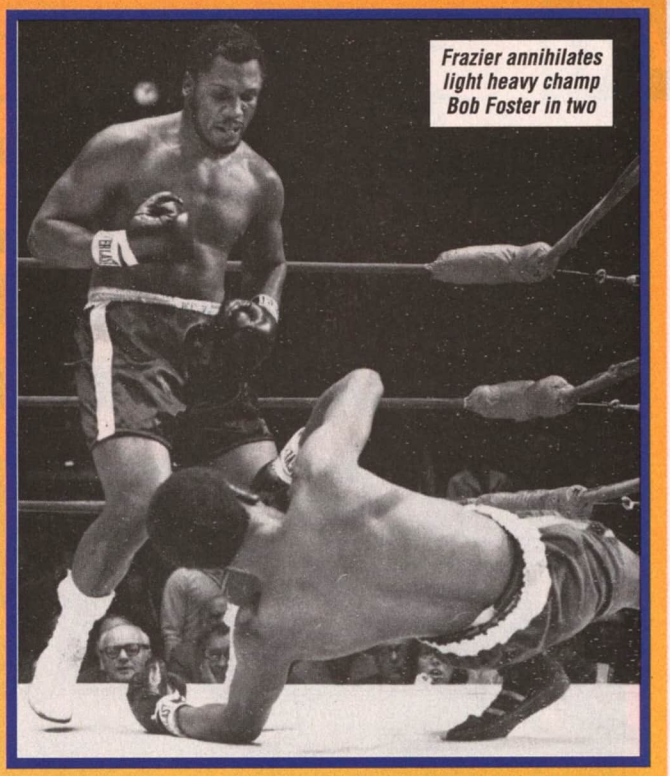
Statistical Analysis: All four of Frazier's losses—yes, 100 percent—were to fellow Hall of Famers. Muhammad Ali and George Foreman both beat him twice; nobody else did. Before his first loss, to Foreman, Frazier's kayo rate was 90 percent. But once he started losing and his prime was behind him, Frazier's kayo percentage plummeted, dropping 17 percentage points in the eight fights following his 29th birthday.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Squat, burly Argentine strongman Oscar Bonavena had just the kind of awkward, mauling style and iron chin to give Frazier fits. They met twice—in September 1966 and again in December 1968—and Frazier could muster only ugly 10-round and 15-round decision wins, respectively.

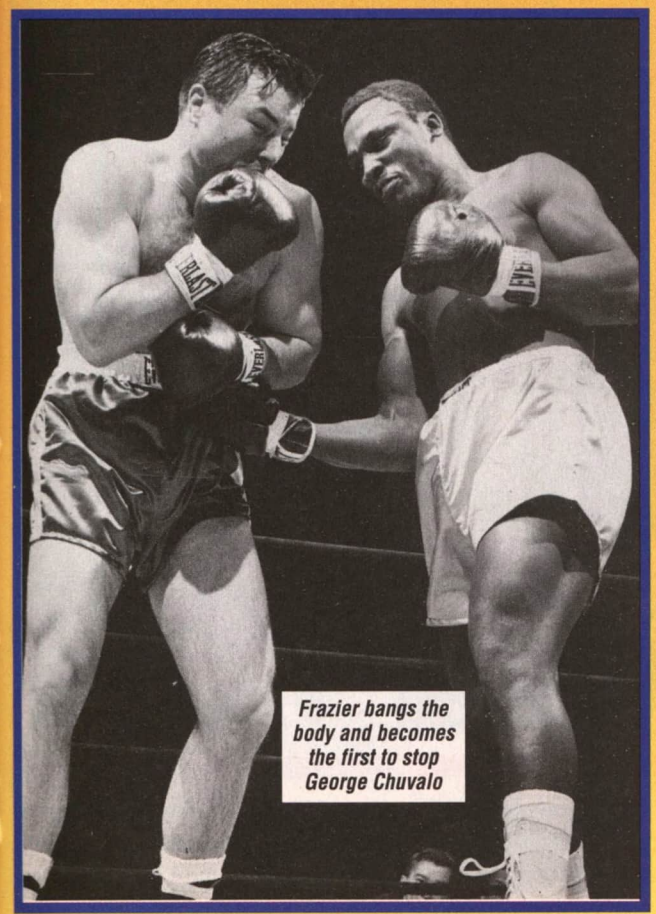
Beyond The Punch: Frazier's legendary trilogy with Ali has distorted his legacy to some degree. He wasn't nearly as easy to hit as Ali made him appear, but neither was he as indestructible as the first and third fights implied. Though he was far from weak-



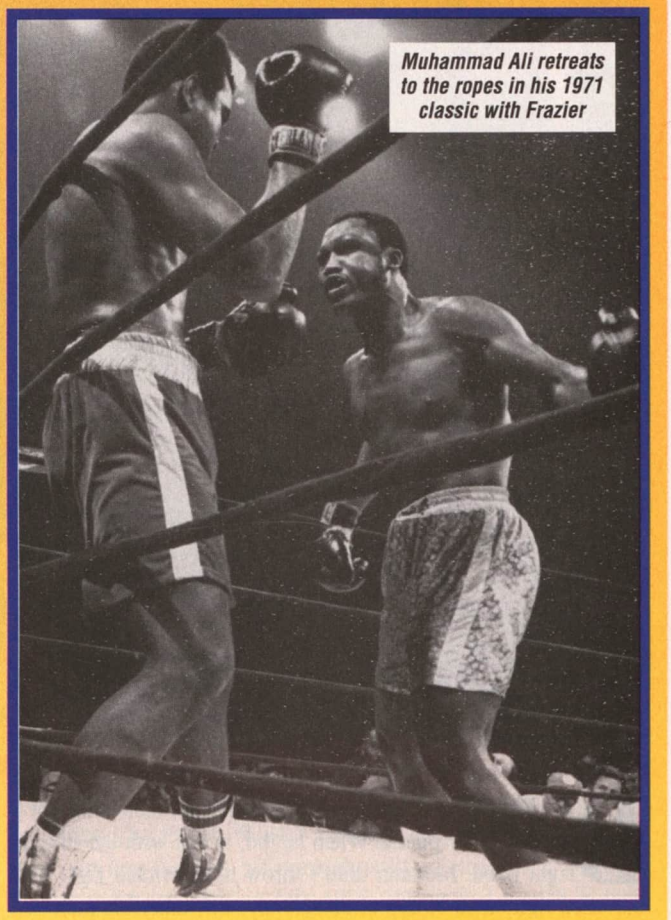
Jerry Quarry feels the impact of Frazier's left



Frazier annihilates light heavy champ Bob Foster in two



Frazier bangs the body and becomes the first to stop George Chuvalo



Muhammad Ali retreats to the ropes in his 1971 classic with Frazier

chinned, Frazier could be hurt, especially early, as Bob Foster and Bonavena showed and as Ali also did in their second fight.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Frazier's hook was useless in both fights against Foreman, who just was too big and strong. If you could back Frazier up he was helpless, and Foreman backed him up easily, just by walking to Frazier, pushing him off, and unloading uppercuts and hooks. He demolished Frazier in two rounds in 1973 for the title and repeated the feat in five rounds three years later.

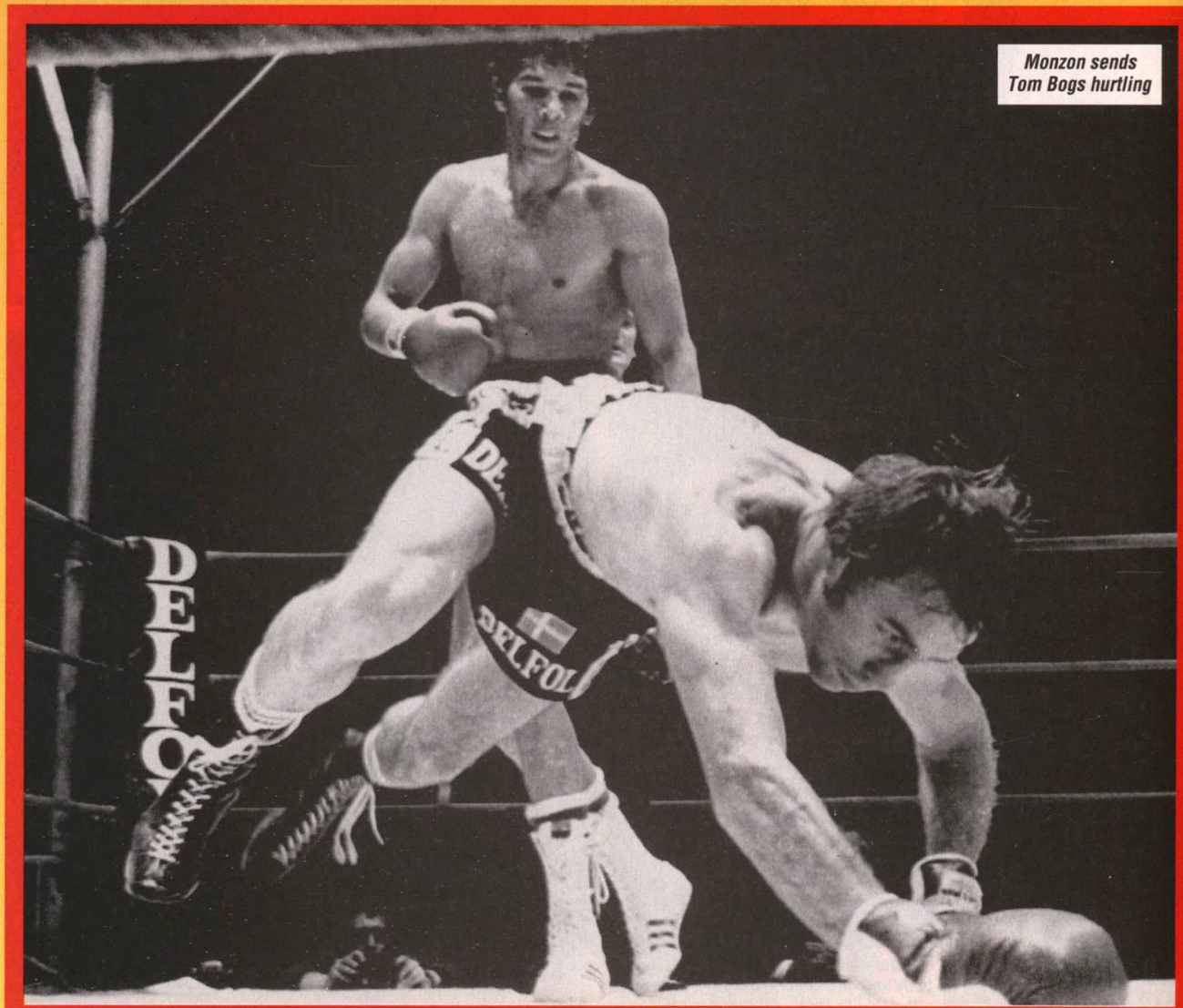
40 CARLOS MONZON

Record: 87-3-9 (59)

with 1 no-contest

Years Fought: 1963-'77

Titles Held: World Middleweight 1970-'77



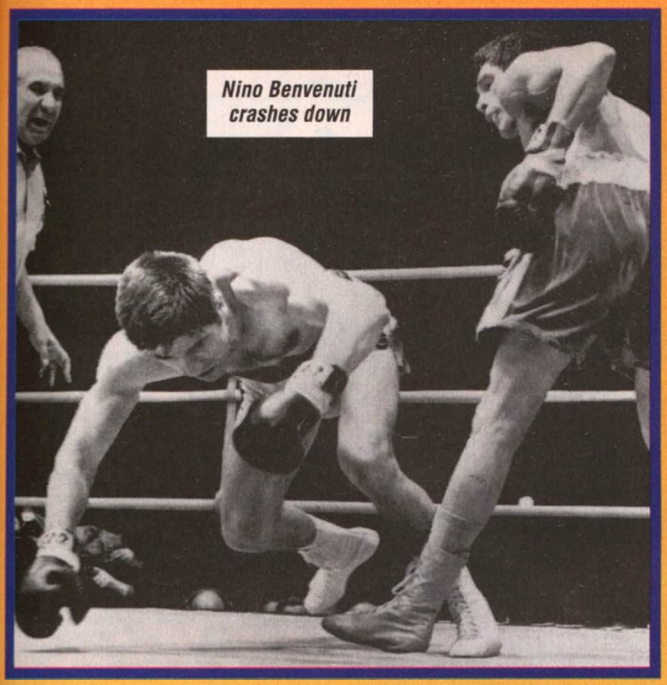
Monzon sends Tom Bogs hurtling

Best Punch: It wasn't very often that Monzon took out a guy with one punch. When he did, it was with the straight right hand. Monzon didn't throw an overhand right or a modified right hook or any of that sloppy stuff other big punchers preferred. He threw a pin-straight right cross down the middle, and more times than not it was preceded by a good, hard jab—the way it says to do it in the textbooks.

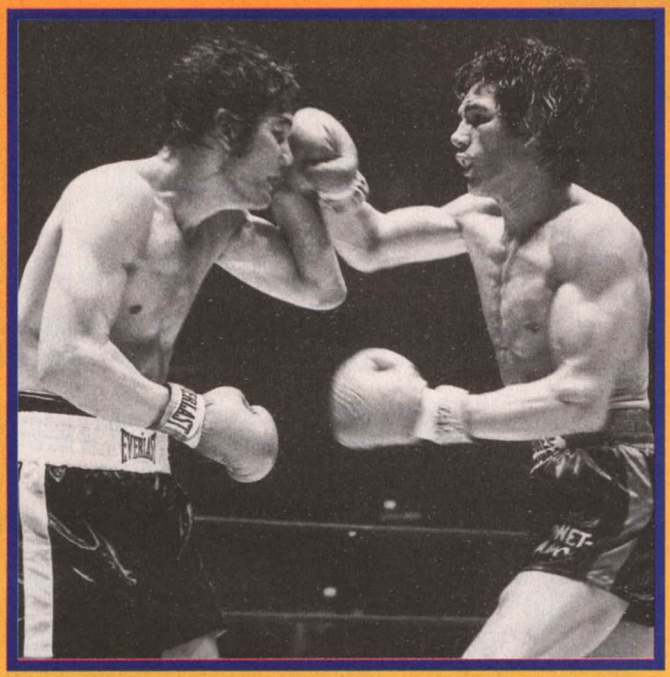
Greatest Knockout: Nobody thought that much of Monzon when he traveled to Italy to challenge middleweight champion Nino Benvenuti in November 1970. But he dominated from the start, rattling Benvenuti with straight right hands. He wobbled him in the seventh, and with a straight right in the 12th, he stretched him for the full count.

Statistical Analysis: How's this for one of the more impressive middleweight streaks in modern history: From June 1969 to June '73, Monzon went 20-0 with 18 knockouts. Included in there was a streak of 11 straight stoppages, the longest run of his career.

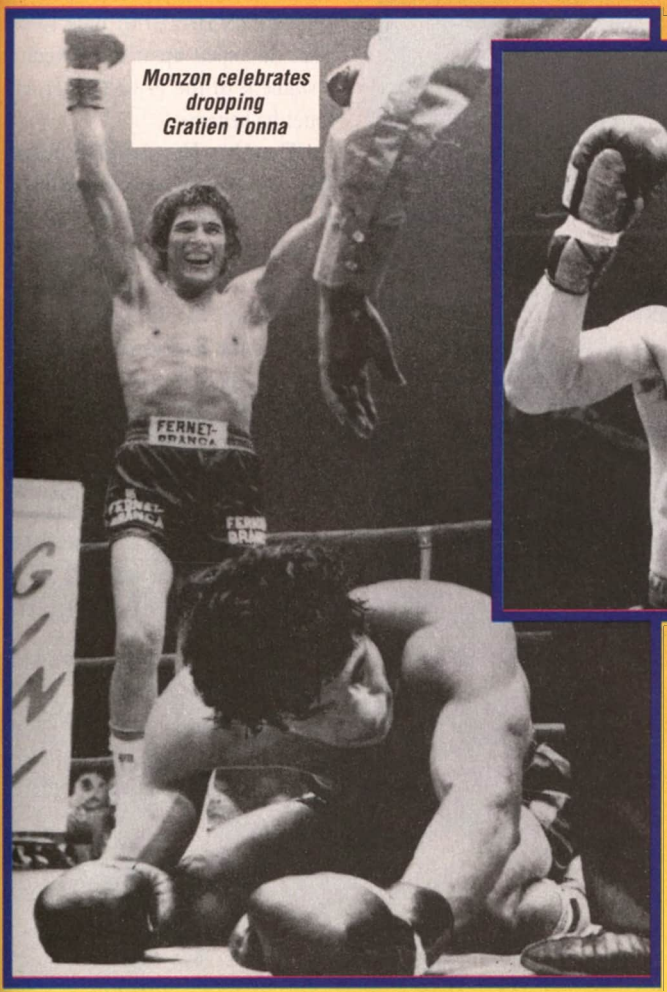
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Monzon did 25 hard rounds



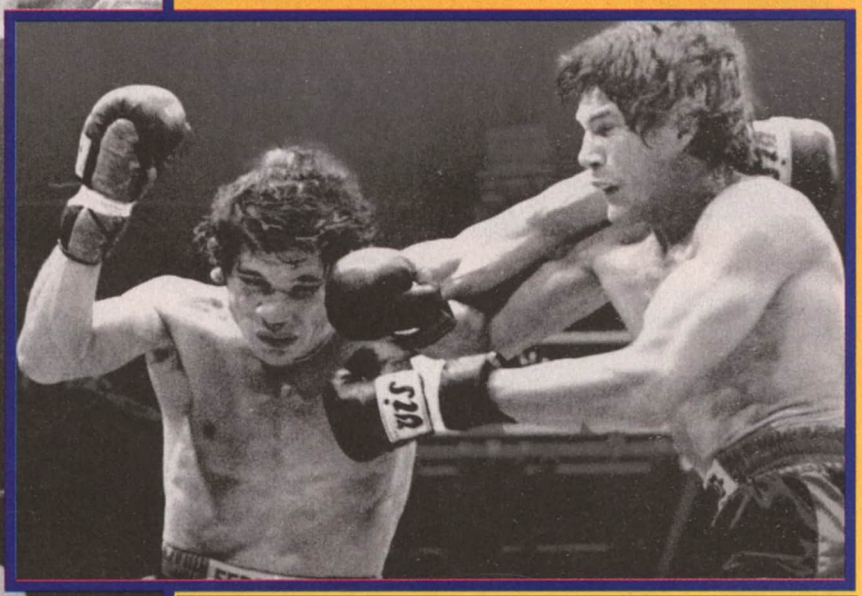
Nino Benvenuti crashes down



Tony Licata gets a close-up look at Monzon's right cross



Monzon celebrates dropping Gratien Tonna



Tonna feels the force of Monzon's right

with the iron-chinned, bald-headed (before it was popular) Philadelphian "Baaaad" Bennie Briscoe and couldn't stop him. In fact, the first fight was called a draw—in Argentina.

Beyond The Punch: Monzon wasn't a one-punch kayo artist most nights and he was no Muhammad Ali, either. But he was methodical, technically very sound, and completely unflappable in the ring. He stood in there calmly and patiently and picked guys apart with sharp, straight blows and unerring accuracy. He also had a mean streak a mile long and enjoyed the hell out of giving a guy a good beating. He was kind of heavy-footed, and his hands weren't so fast either. But he did so many things so well that he was damned near perfect, even if it didn't always look like it.

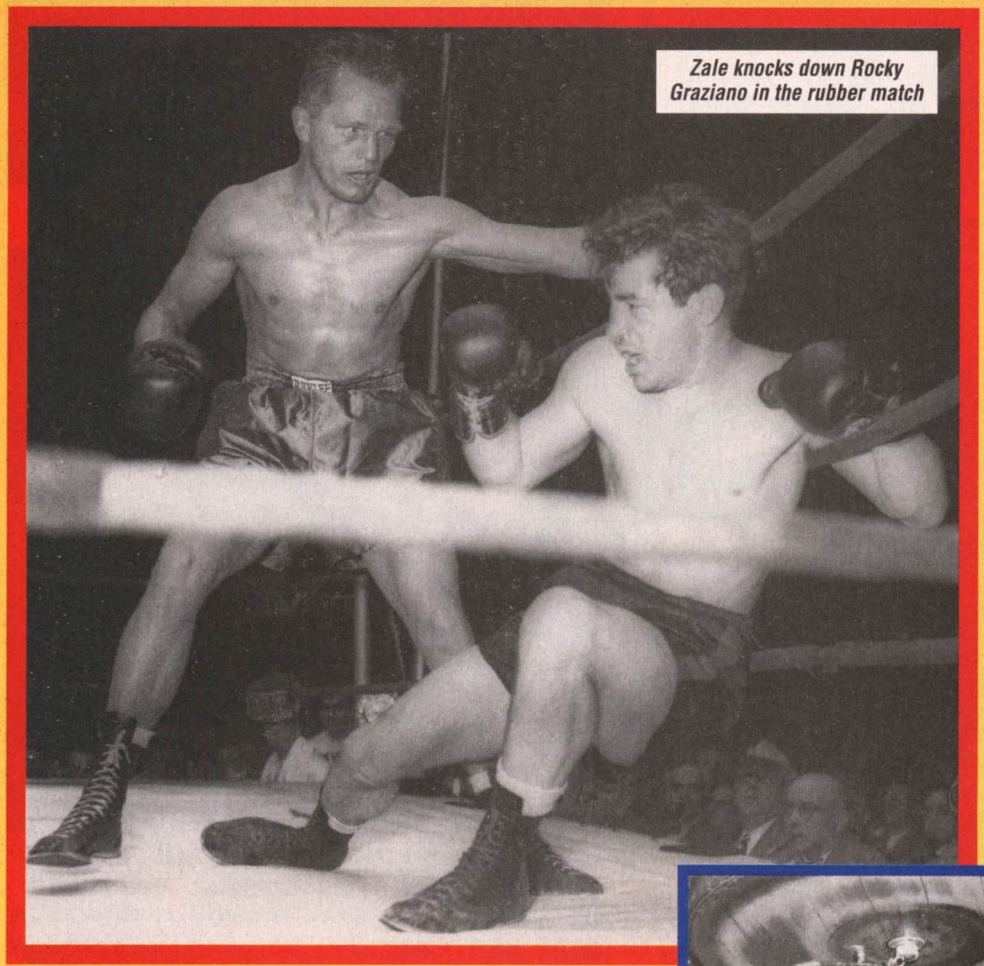
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Monzon's power wasn't what got him through his rematch with wicked-hitting Rodrigo Valdes in Monte Carlo in July 1977. Valdes had proved in their first fight that he could take Monzon's power, and if anyone had to be more careful in there, it was Monzon. In fact, Valdes floored him in the second round of the rematch. But Monzon's grit, counterpunching ability, and his smart, timely movement led him to a unanimous decision win in the last fight of his career.

41 TONY ZALE

Record: 68-18-2 (45)

Years Fought: 1934-'48

Titles Held: NBA Middleweight 1940-'41; World Middleweight 1941-'47, 1948



Zale knocks down Rocky Graziano in the rubber match

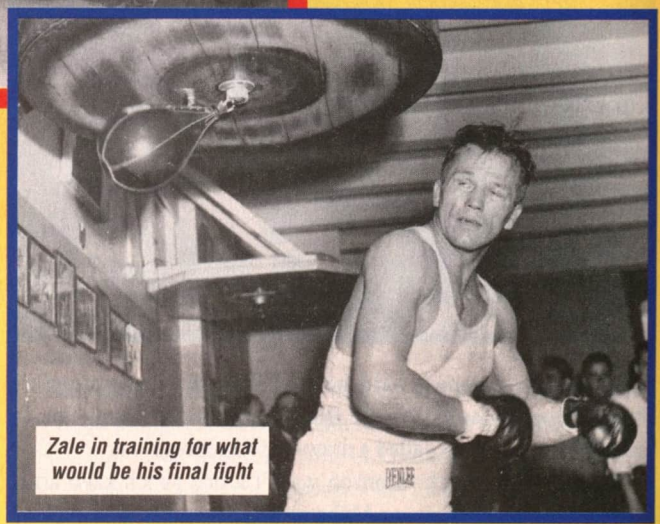
Best Punch: Most frequently you saw Zale knocking guys dead with the left hook, but mostly it was after he'd taken their heart away with pile-driver right hands to the body. Zale was the best bodypuncher of his generation, and the right hands he dug deep into his opponent's ribcage or under his heart were the stuff that made him a legend. If you had to fight Zale, it was the punch you feared the most.

Greatest Knockout: Zale was already past his prime in September 1946 when he defended against the favored Rocky Graziano in New York. He scored a flash knockdown in the first, but over the next four rounds, Graziano battered him. Zale looked like a beaten fighter until halfway through the sixth, when a right to the body deflated Graziano, and a follow-up left hook stretched him.

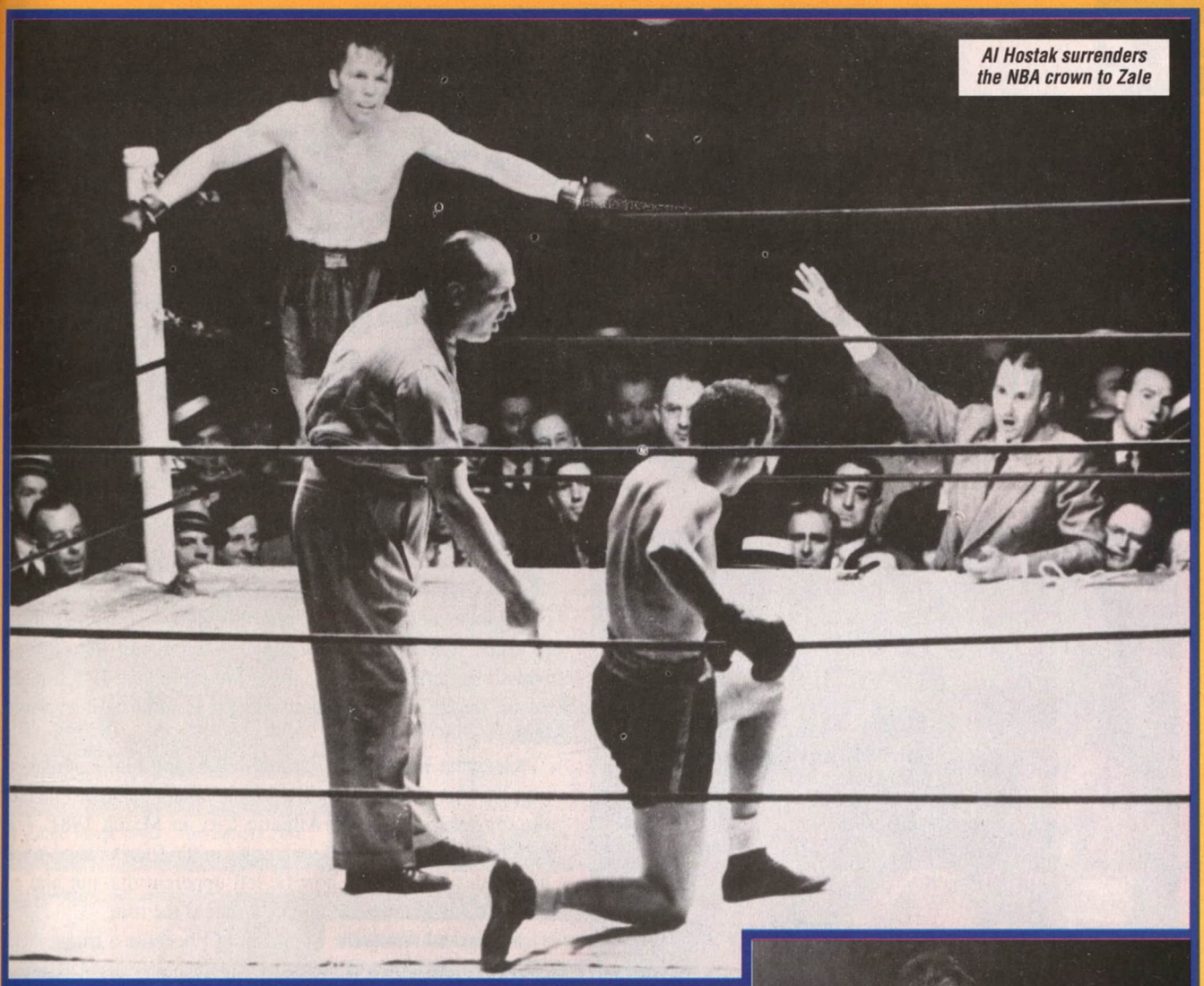
Statistical Analysis: Talk about a rocky start, if you'll excuse the pun. After 30 fights, Zale's kayo rate was a paltry 30 percent. He was 18-10-1 with nine stops. That he ended up at 51 percent is testament to the great fighter and hitter he became.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Zale fought the excellent Nate Bolden more times than he did Graziano and never was able to stop him. They fought twice in 1937, once in '38, and again in '39, and the best Zale could manage was a pair of decision wins.

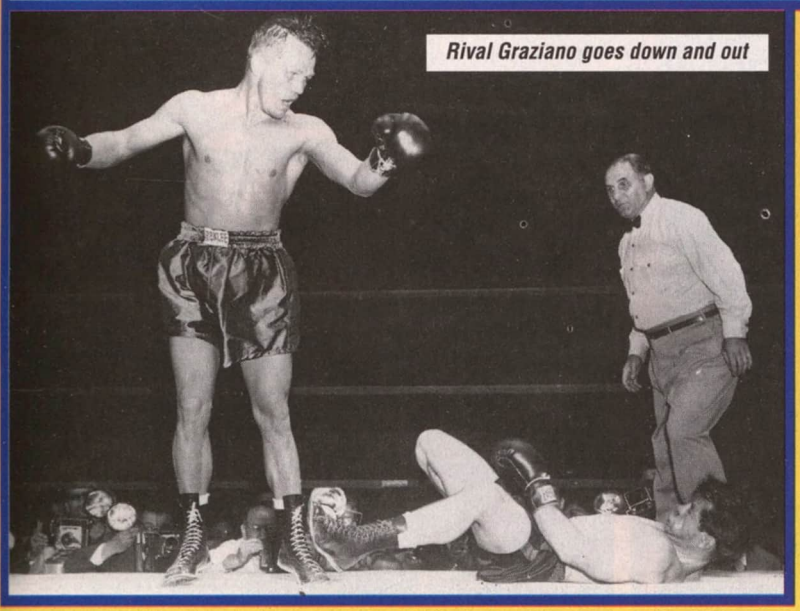
Beyond The Punch: Zale was no ballerina. He was a rough, tough guy who came at you with both guns firing, and if he had to take a good beating early in a fight to get you late, he was okay with it. What he lacked in finesse and



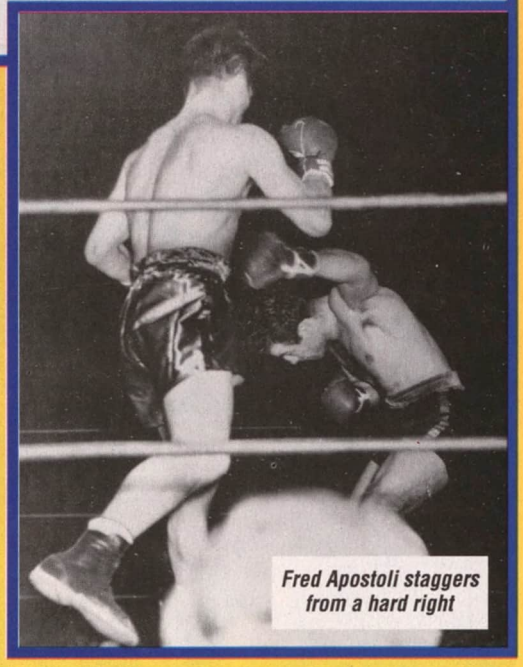
Zale in training for what would be his final fight



Al Hostak surrenders the NBA crown to Zale



Rival Graziano goes down and out



Fred Apostoli staggers from a hard right

defense he made up for with grit, power, and determination. Most nights, that was enough.

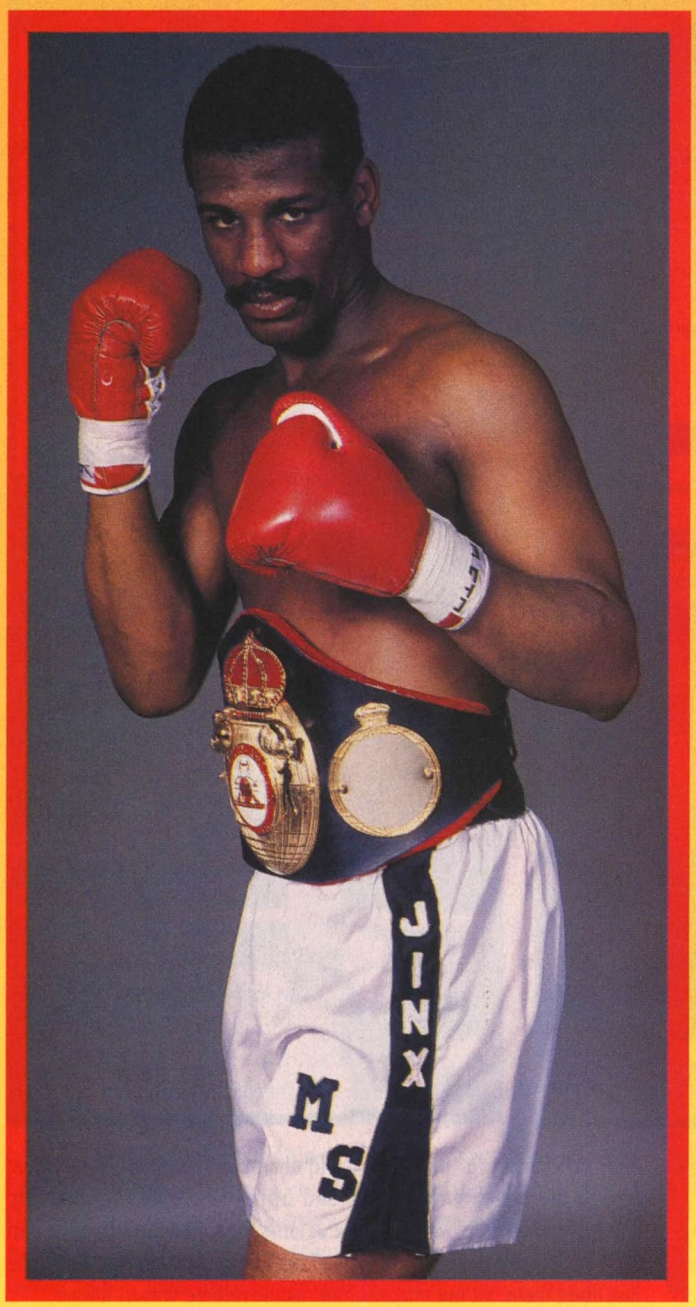
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In the last fight of his career, Zale defended against French hero Marcel Cerdan in New Jersey in September 1948. Almost from the start, Cerdan was too busy and strong for the 35-year-old champion and consistently beat him to the punch with double and triple left hooks. In the 12th, Cerdan pinned an exhausted Zale against the ropes and knocked him limp with a pair of hooks. In typical fashion, Zale didn't go down, he just hung there, all but unconscious, as the referee waved it over.

42 MICHAEL SPINKS

Record: 31-1 (21)

Years Fought: 1977-'88

Titles Held: WBA Light Heavyweight 1981-'83; World Light Heavyweight, 1983-'85; IBF Heavyweight 1985-'87

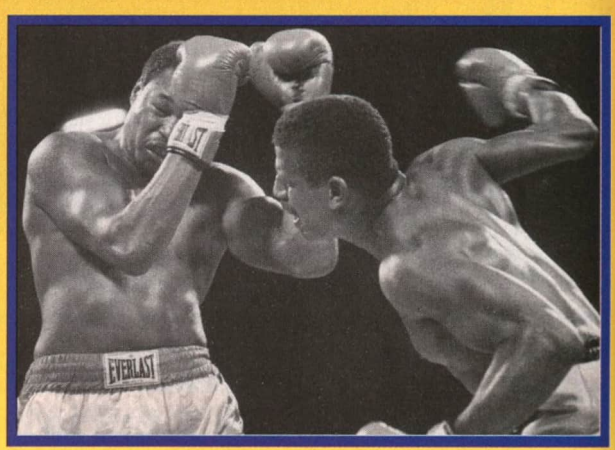


Best Punch: Both Michael and brother Leon carried "The Spinks Jinx" into the pros following the 1976 Olympics, but it really was Michael who possessed one-punch power, most of it in his right fist. Spinks liked to come forward behind a long, stiff jab and then drop a whistling right—the Jinx—over his foe's guard. If it landed on the chin, the fight usually was over a short while later.

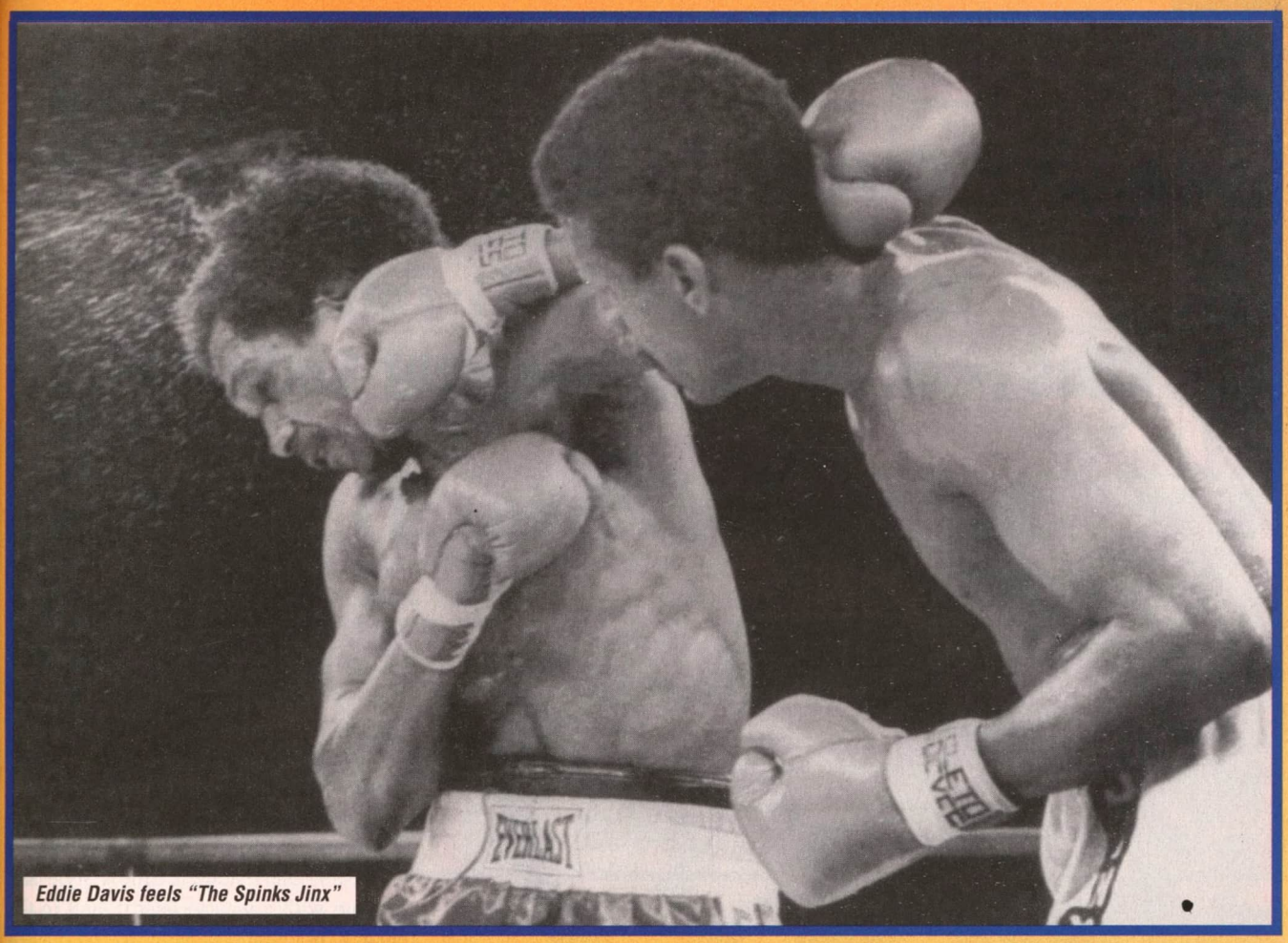
Greatest Knockout: Former WBA king Marvin Johnson was past his prime, but still a viable contender when he met the top-rated Spinks in Atlantic City in March 1981. The fast-starting Johnson was swarming in the fourth round when he ran headlong into a horrific left uppercut that put him on his back and guaranteed Spinks a shot at the title.

Statistical Analysis: Spinks didn't become a true knockout artist until after winning the light heavyweight championship. Up through the fight in '81 in which he claimed the WBA title, he won 11 of 17 fights by kayo, a rate of 65 percent. As a champion over the next four years, he made 10 defenses, eight by knockout—a rate of 80 percent.

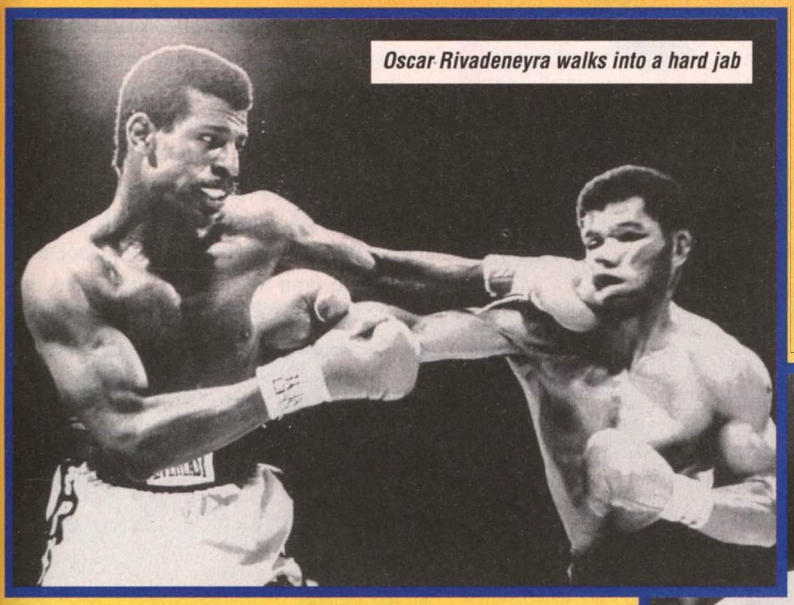
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Spinks tried like hell but he never could get a good handle on the slick Eddie Davis during their February 1984 tussle for Spinks' title. He dominated the 32-year-old early, but Davis rallied in the



Spinks upsets Larry Holmes for the heavyweight title



Eddie Davis feels "The Spinks Jinx"

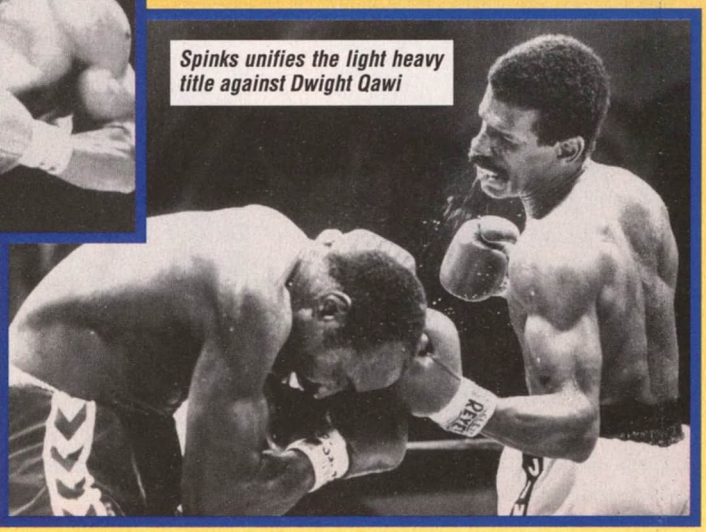


Oscar Rivadeneyra walks into a hard jab

second half of the fight, even stunning Spinks late. Spinks had to settle for a mildly controversial decision win.

Beyond The Punch: Spinks' greatest asset wasn't his punch, but his versatility. Against guys he knew he couldn't outslug—Eddie Mustafa Muhammad and Dwight Muhammad Qawi at light heavy, Larry Holmes at heavy—he was an awkwardly effective boxer, moving judiciously and smartly behind a pecking jab and a herky-jerky, surprisingly hard-to-crack defense. He wasn't fun to watch in that mode, but he got the job done against some very good fighters.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Although Spinks could punch even as a heavyweight, he was no match for young, powerful Mike Tyson in their unification bout in June 1988. In what turned out to be the final fight of his career, Spinks tried to punch with Tyson early in the first and was countered, floored twice—the only times he was down in his pro career—and stopped in just 91 seconds.



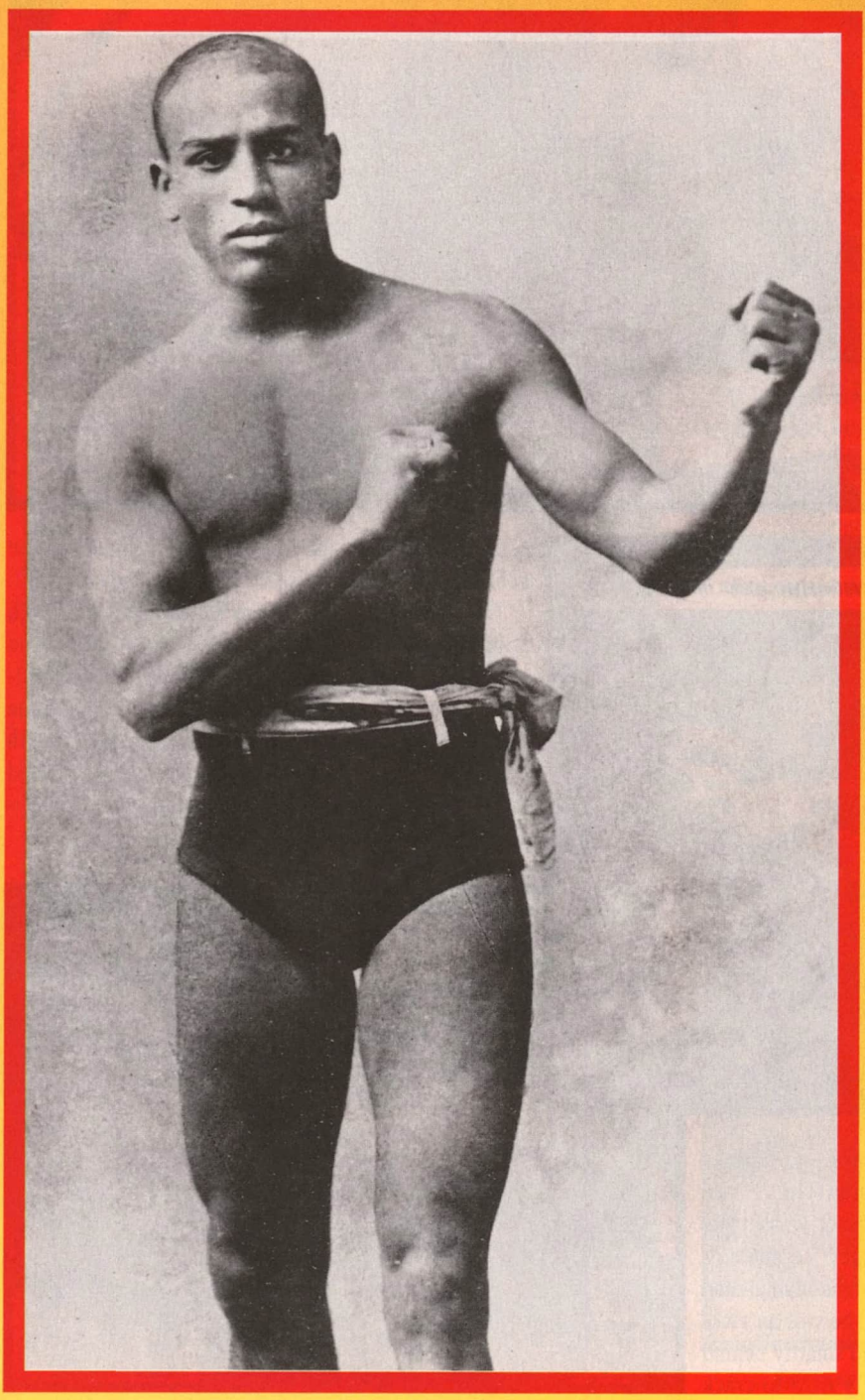
Spinks unifies the light heavy title against Dwight Qawi

43 JOE GANS

Record: 120-8-9 (85)
with 18 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1891-1909

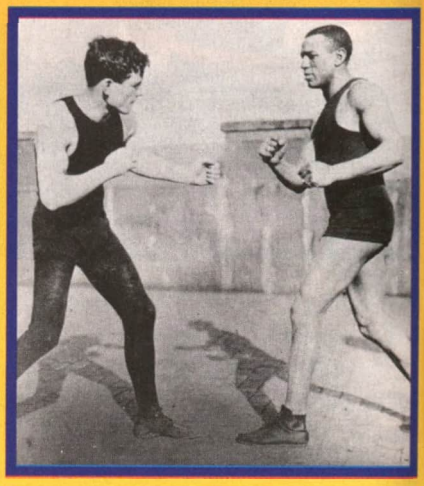
Titles Held: World Lightweight 1902-'08



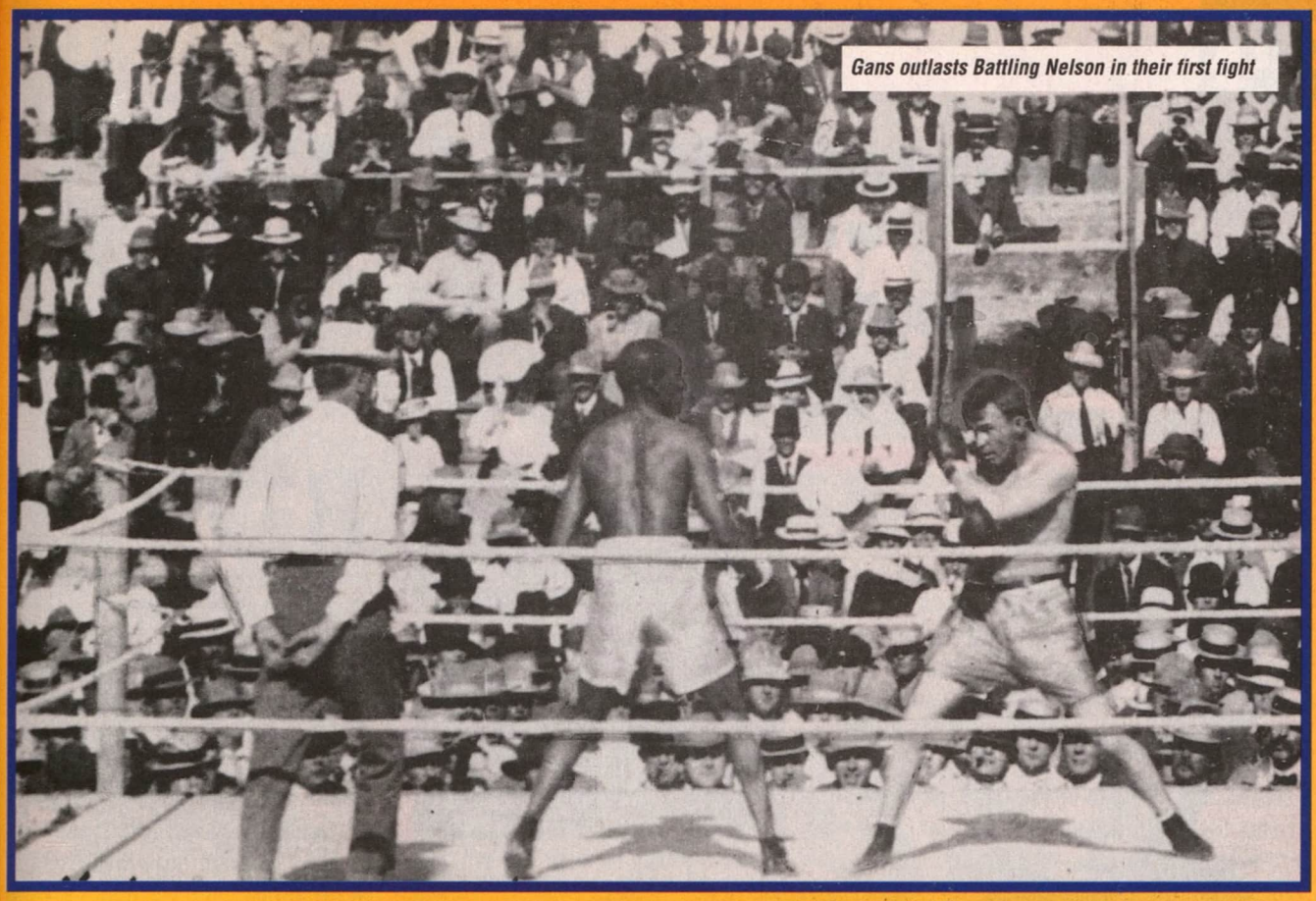
Best Punch: Gans is remembered as rather a Fancy Dan, and to some degree, and for that era at least, he was. He was among the two or three best counterpunchers of the day and liked to move around to create punching angles. But once he got his angle on a guy, he stopped moving and beat him down, usually with a wicked straight right hand.

Greatest Knockout: Lightweight champion Frank Erne cut up Gans' eye and stopped him in their first match, in New York in March 1900. Over the next two years, Gans studied Erne's style and came up with a way to beat it, and in the rematch, in Ontario in May '02, he blasted Erne out in less than a round to win the world title.

Statistical Analysis: For all his two-fisted power and smarts, Gans was a streaky guy when it came to knockouts. In one stretch from September 1901 to December '02, he stopped 17 of 19 opponents. But from September to December of '99, he won six straight decisions and



Gans spars with Packey McFarland

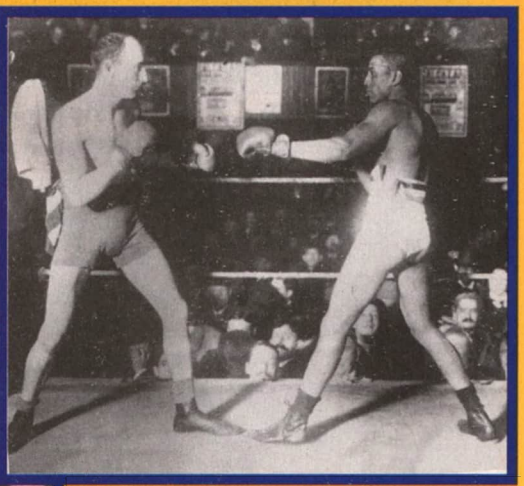


Gans outlasts Battling Nelson in their first fight

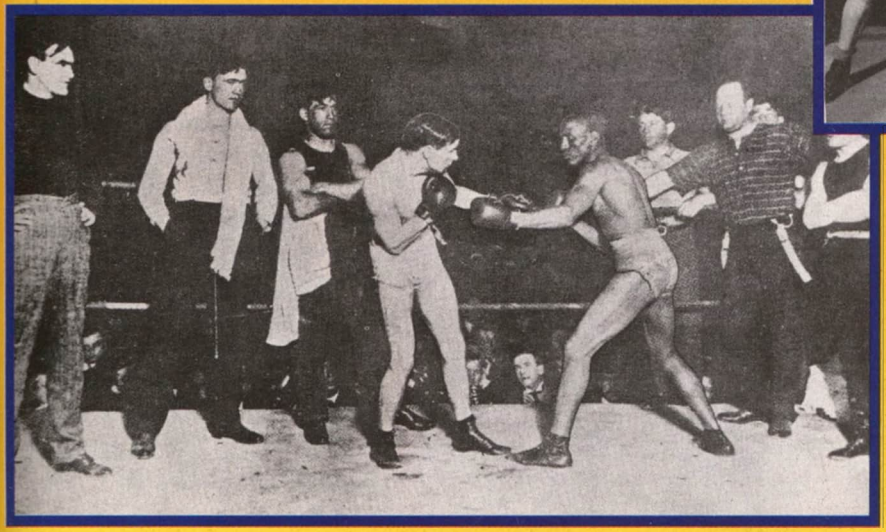
then fought Kid McPartland to a draw. Still, his 85 kayo wins and 55 percent kayo rate in the era of no-decisions are remarkable.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Like many of the great black fighters of the era, Gans met future Hall of Fame trainer Jack Blackburn several times but couldn't stop him. They fought to no-decisions in Philadelphia in 1903 and '06, and Gans outpointed him over 15 rounds in Baltimore, Maryland, in '04.

Beyond The Punch: Gans was decades ahead of his time and is generally credited as one of the pioneers who introduced to the masses a more "scientific" method of fighting. He was uncannily intelligent in the ring and a superb counterpuncher. He outmaneuvered guys until he saw the opening he wanted, took it, and often times knocked his man flat.



Mike "Twin" Sullivan and Gans square off



"The Old Master" meets Jimmy Britt in San Francisco

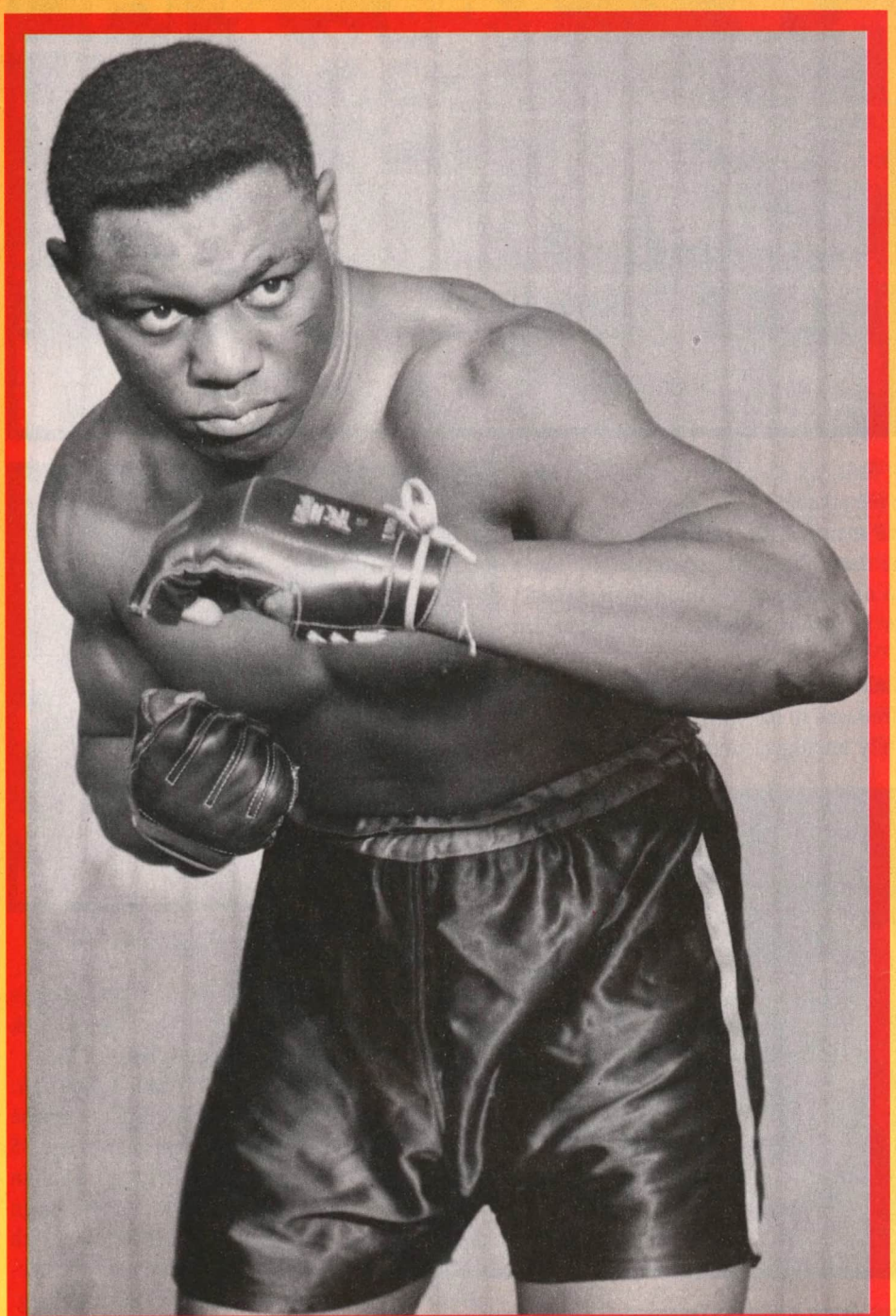
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Gans probably was already dying from the tuberculosis that would kill him at age 35 when Battling Nelson twice stopped him in California in '08. He'd beaten Nelson in on a foul in '06 and lasted into the 17th and 21st rounds, respectively, in the second and third bouts, before succumbing. He died a year later.

44 ELMER "VIOLENT" RAY

Record: 86-15-1 (73)
with 1 no-contest

Years Fought: 1926-'49

Titles Held: none



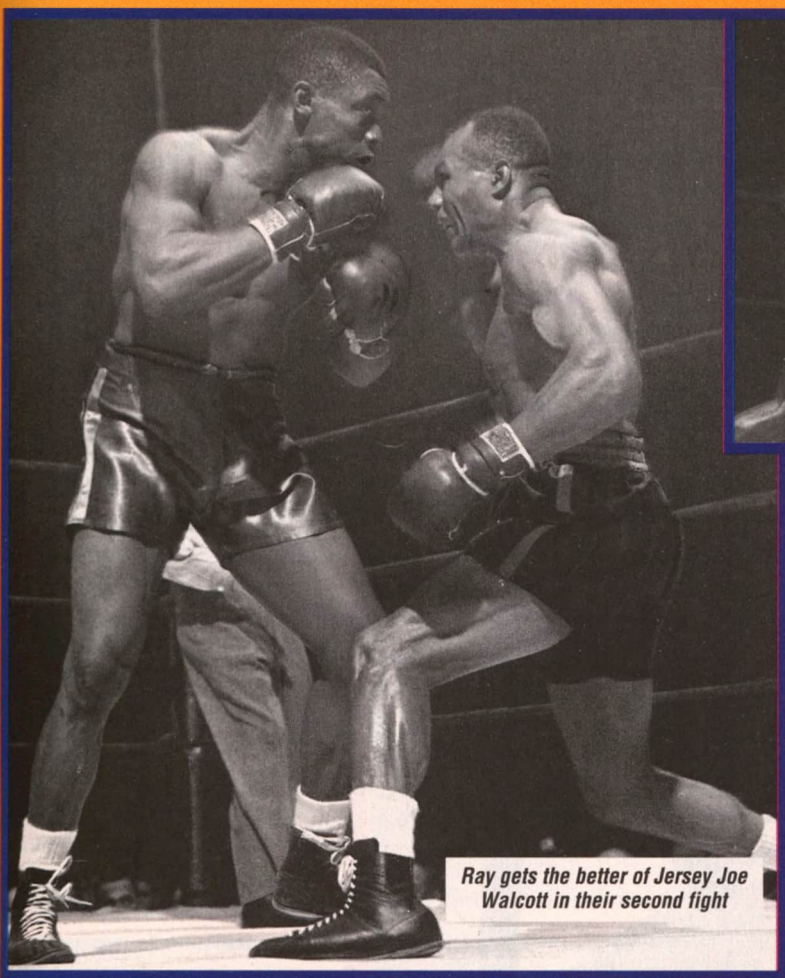
Best Punch: Anyone who saw him would tell you Ray was a heavy-handed, two-fisted banger who got guys out of there with every punch a prize fighter can throw. But the left hook, especially, was a wrecking ball. If his man was still standing after it landed, Ray typically followed it with the straight right. He usually didn't have to.

Greatest Knockout: In the first of his several appearances at Madison Square Garden—a very big deal during that era—Ray crushed fellow prospect Jimmy Shamus O'Brien in three rounds in March 1945. The performance was sufficient to scare away most of the world's top heavyweights—including Joe Louis, some thought.

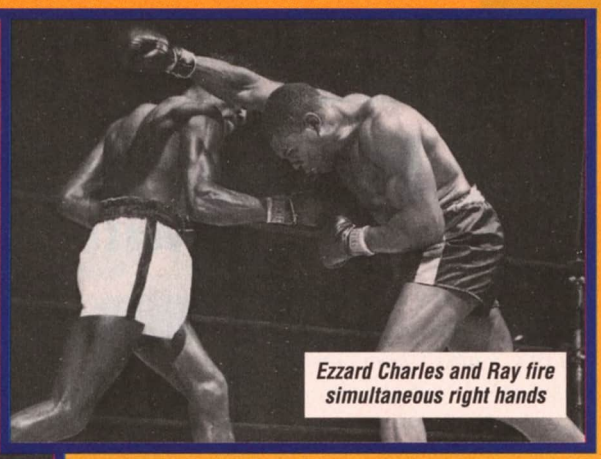
Statistical Analysis: Ray put together some staggering kayo streaks: After losing his first pro bout, he won 15 straight, all by knockout, 11 in the first round. He won 17 straight by kayo between November '45 and November '46. Ray's 73 knockouts occurred, on average, in three rounds. His 71 percent kayo rate compares favorably with history's best heavyweight punchers.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Ray was able to decision Jersey Joe Walcott in November 1946 in New York, but that was it. Walcott had stopped him in three in New York in September '37, and 10 years later he decisioned Ray over 10 rounds in Florida.

Beyond The Punch: While it's true that Ray's greatest asset was



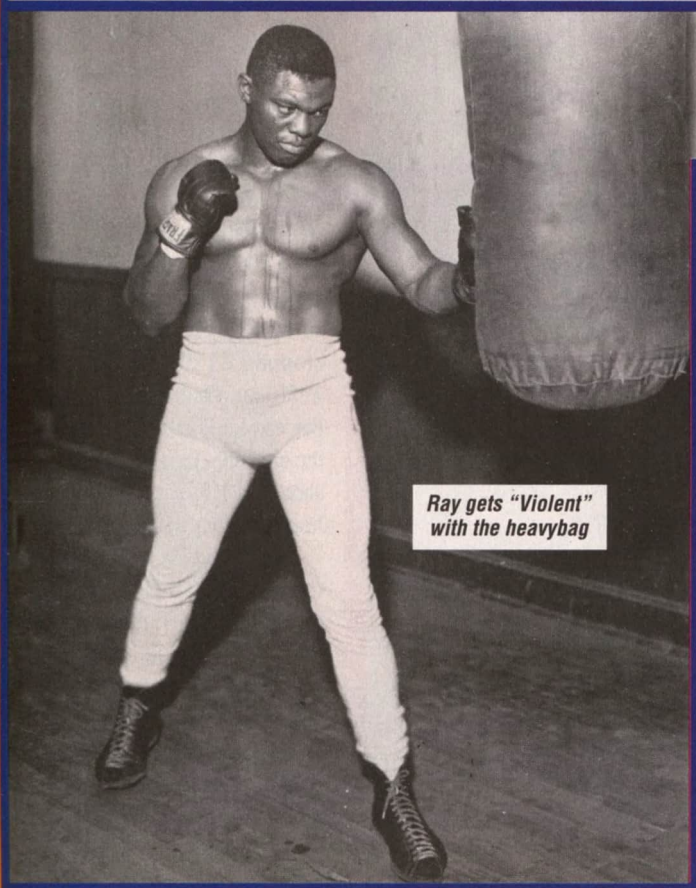
Ray gets the better of Jersey Joe Walcott in their second fight



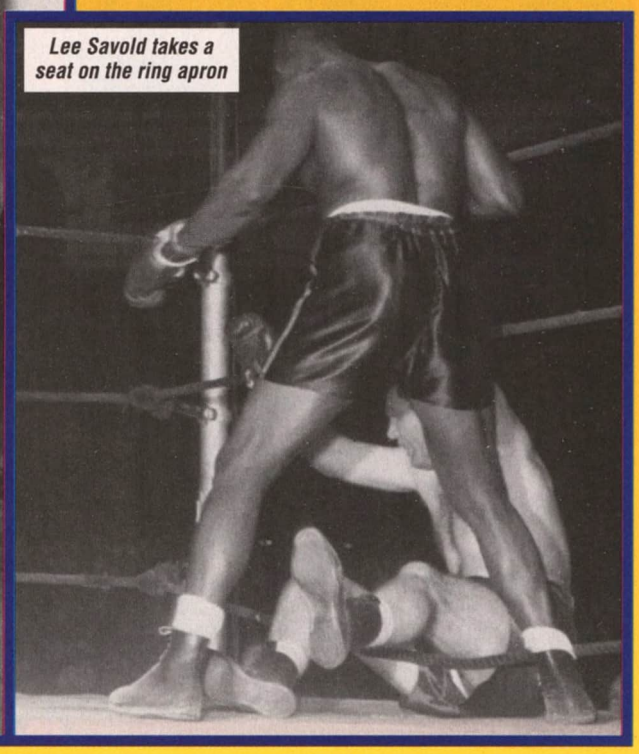
Ezzard Charles and Ray fire simultaneous right hands

his dynamite left hand, he was no crude thug in there. Sportswriters of the era praised his combination punching and defensive ability—he could slip and slide as he was walking his man down and jabbed his way into position. He split a pair of fights with the great Ezzard Charles. So what was his weakness? Like many great punchers, he didn't have a great chin: Eleven of his 15 losses were by knockout, seven within the first three rounds.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In May 1938 Ray challenged the exceptional light heavyweight champion John Henry Lewis in a non-title bout in Georgia. By this time Lewis was nearly blind in one eye, but he stayed with Ray, outfought him late, and stopped him in the 12th round. Eight months and four fights later, Lewis was flattened in a round by his friend and heavyweight champion Joe Louis and never fought again.



Ray gets "Violent" with the heavybag



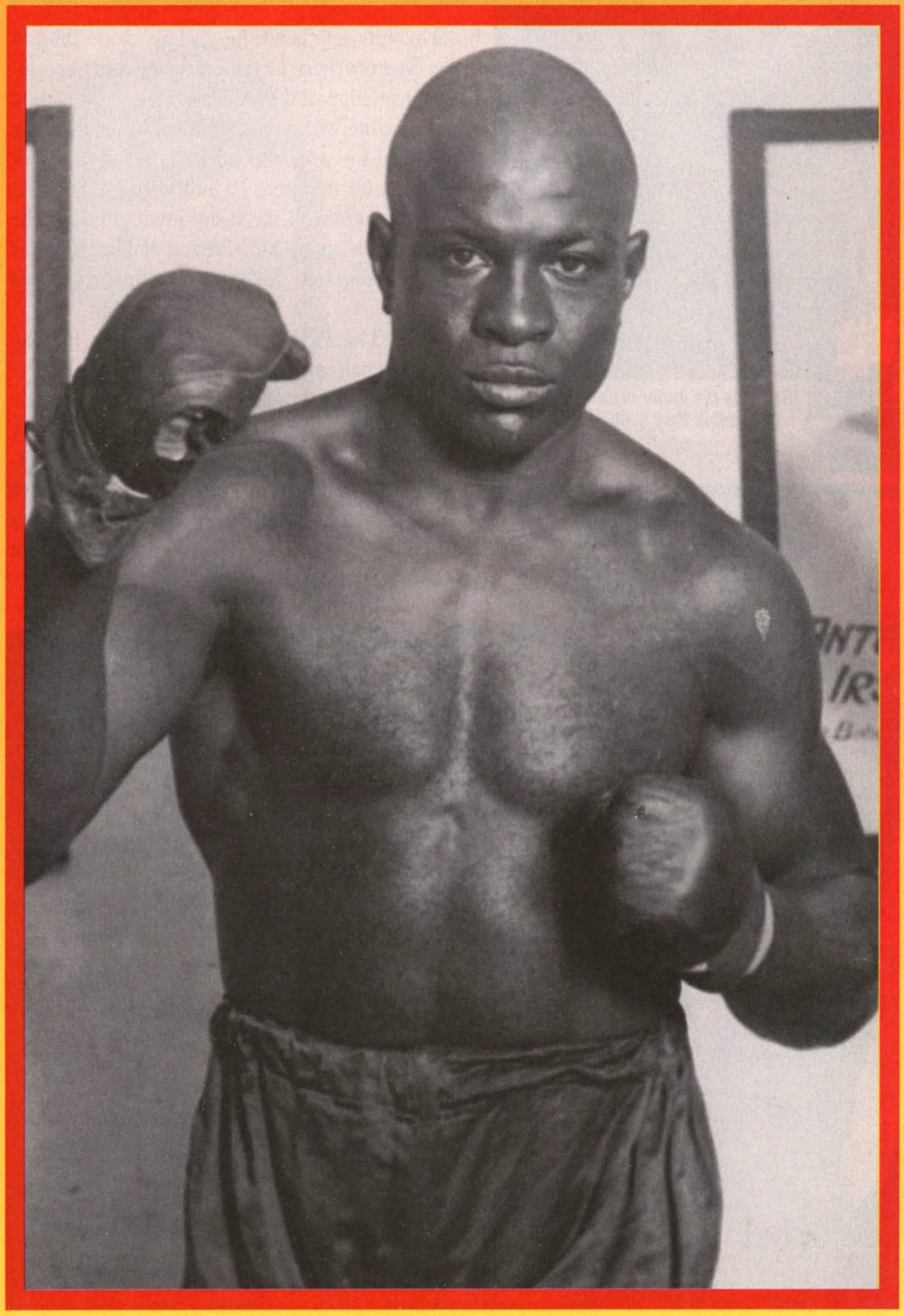
Lee Savold takes a seat on the ring apron

45 GEORGE GODFREY

Record: 93-22-3 (77)
with 7 no-contests

Years Fought: 1912-'37

Titles Held: none



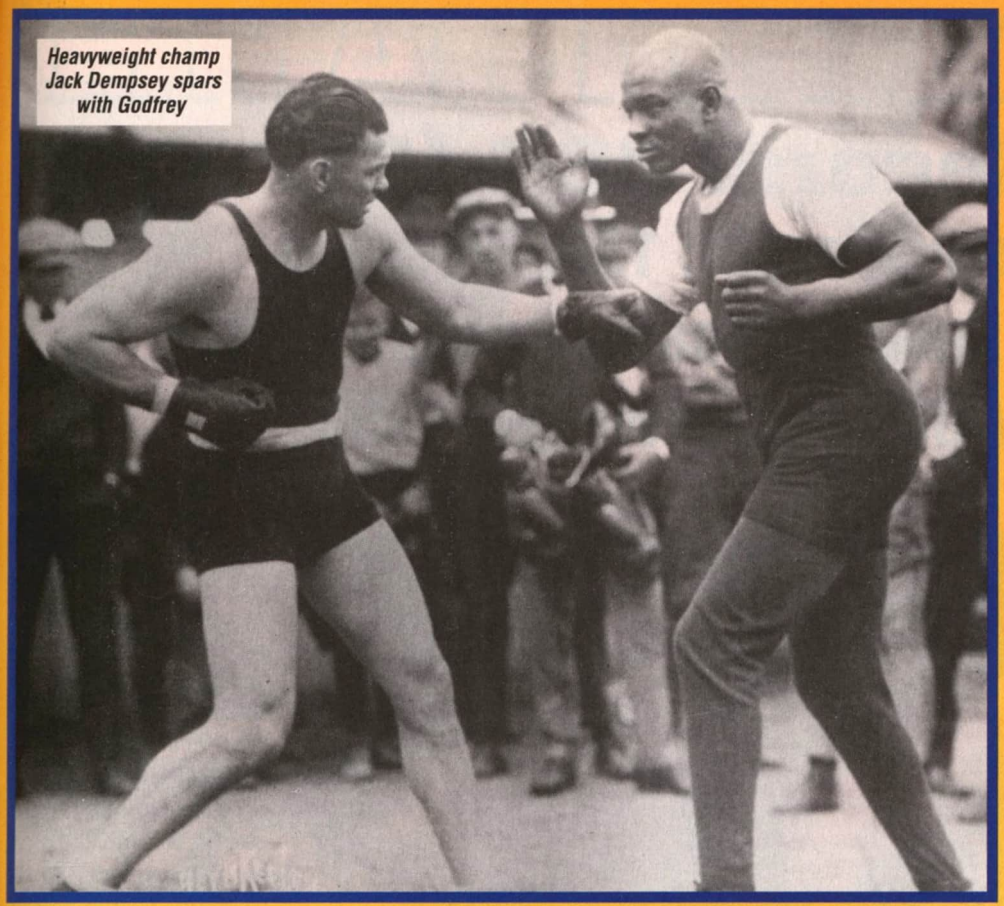
Best Punch: Godfrey's punishing left was good as a jab or a hook. The jab set guys up, the hook took them out. He drove it to the body as well as he did to the head, and if his man was still standing after the jab and the hook, the right hand was behind it. It wasn't good to be in the ring with him.

Greatest Knockout: In December 1925 in Minnesota, Godfrey met fellow powerpuncher and top contender Fred Fulton. It's true that Fulton was a white hope and was manufactured to a degree, and it's true too that Jack Dempsey wrecked him in under a round. But it remains that he was a big puncher and a top guy, and Godfrey outslugged him and stopped him in five rounds.

Statistical Analysis: Between May 1927 and July '29, Godfrey knocked out 23 of 28 opponents in an average of 3.3 rounds. He also stopped 21 of 24 between July 1930 and December '32. His 62 percent kayo rate is very high for the era, and that he never received a shot at Jack Dempsey for the world heavyweight title is inexplicable.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Godfrey and Ed "Bearcat" Wright met three times, twice for Godfrey's "colored" heavyweight title; they fought to a 10-round no-contest in November 1926, a draw in December '30, and a six-round no-contest in February '33. Wright was one of the very good underrated heavyweights of the period.

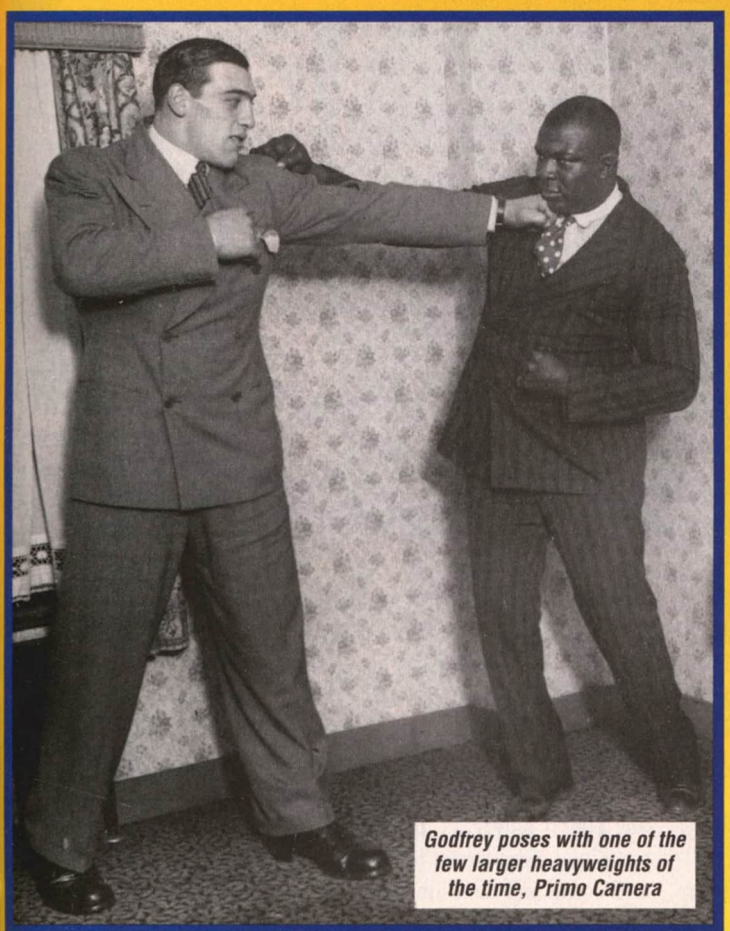
Beyond The Punch: At 6'4"



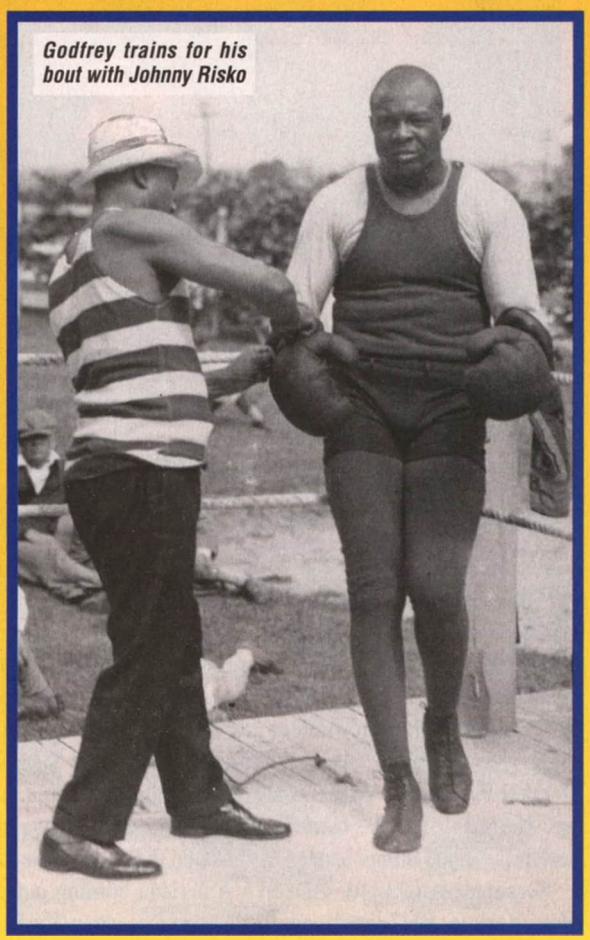
Heavyweight champ Jack Dempsey spars with Godfrey

and fighting from anywhere between 220 and 260 pounds, Godfrey was a giant for his day and he fought like it, using his physical strength and presence to overwhelm smaller opponents. He also was a punishing bodypuncher and at times his tactics raised eyebrows. In an odd fight against future heavyweight champion Primo Carnera, Godfrey, who was in control, pushed Carnera into a corner in the fifth round and drilled him with a hook below the belt. He immediately was disqualified, and rumors circulated that it had been a fixed fight.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In his first couple of years as a pro, Godfrey was thrown in three times with the brilliant Sam Langford. Langford drew with him in the first fight—he almost certainly carried him. In their second and third meetings, Godfrey was stopped in the second and first rounds, respectively.



Godfrey poses with one of the few larger heavyweights of the time, Primo Carnera



Godfrey trains for his bout with Johnny Risko

46 NASEEM HAMED

Record: 36-1 (31)

Years Fought: 1992-Present

Titles Held: IBF Featherweight 1997; WBC Featherweight 1999

Tom "Boom Boom" Johnson fields a booming right hand

Best Punch: Hamed's leaping uppercut is probably his most discussed punch, and there is no doubting its power. But it is its insult to convention more than anything that makes it spectacular. The southpaw Hamed's true bread and butter punch is far less scandalous: the straight left hand. It's the punch that stiffened Vuyani Bungu, nearly beheaded poor Augie Sanchez, and stopped Paul Ingle, Wilfredo Vazquez, Manuel Medina, and others. Hamed drives the blow home with those middleweight legs, and unfortunate things happen to those on the receiving end.

Greatest Knockout: Hamed's American coming-out party in New York in 1997 nearly ended disastrously when Kevin Kelley rocked him early. The two proceeded to trade power-punches and knockdowns in a wild, highly entertaining slugfest until Hamed's booming left cross put Kelley down for the full count in the fourth round.

Statistical Analysis: Was Hamed already slipping by his mid-20s, or did his competition just get tougher following his American debut? Consider: His first 29 fights went an average of 3.75 rounds. His last eight fights have gone an average of 9.25 rounds. Prior to fighting Wayne McCullough in 1998, Hamed put together a knockout streak of 18 in a row, one of the best of modern times against primarily world-class opposition.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Hamed just couldn't get tough Mexican Cesar Soto in his sights for very long when they met for the WBC featherweight title in October '99 in Detroit. He tried, but Soto was too awkward and reluctant to engage. They clinched frequently and constantly were entangled. As a result, the closest Hamed came to scoring a knockdown was when he picked Soto up off the canvas and bodyslammed him. He settled for a lopsided decision win.

Beyond The Punch: Hamed's great strength, outside of his one-punch power, is his wholesale lack of conventional boxing technique. Opponents have no idea from what angle his punches will come and therefore often are hard pressed to defend against them. On the other hand, his lack of balance and amateurish

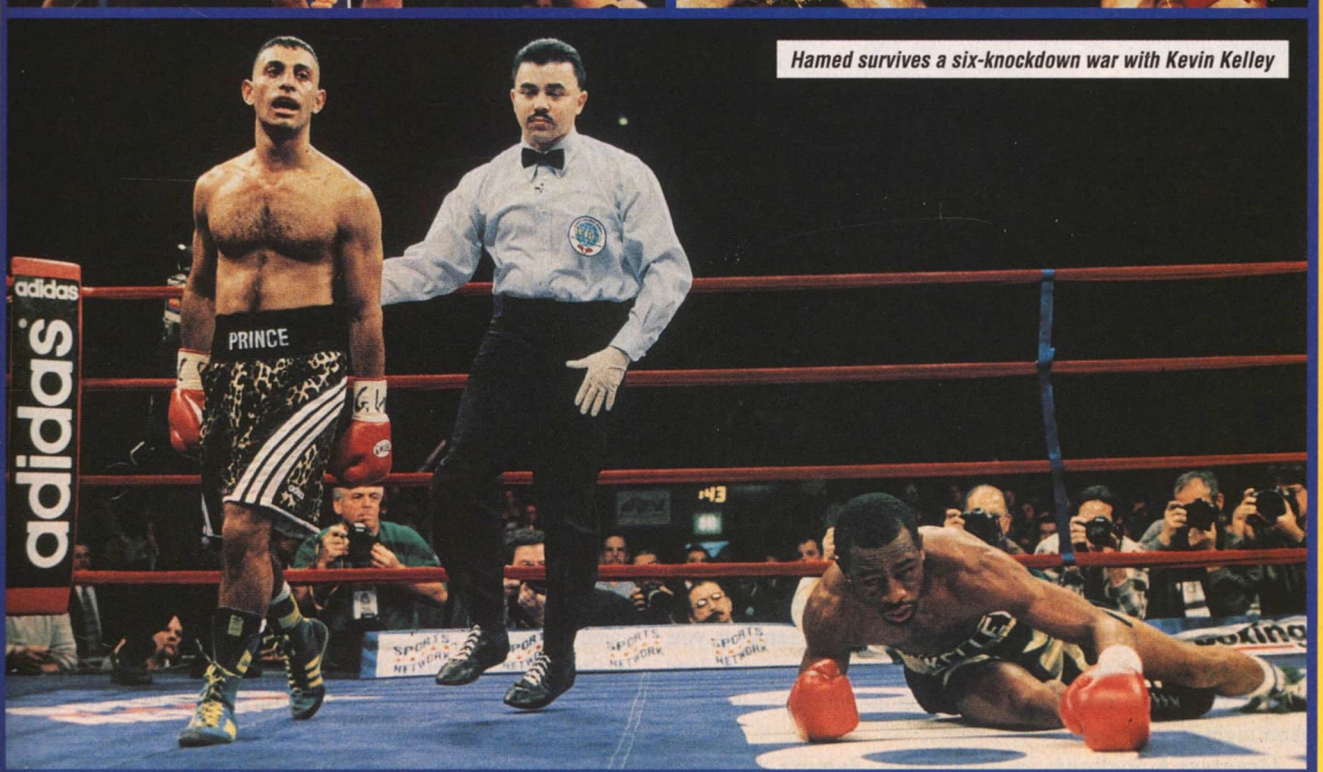
Hamed catches Paul Ingle with a right

defensive methods leave him forever vulnerable to straight, hard punches and subsequent knockdowns.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: It seems impossible now to think that Hamed was favored over Marco Antonio Barrera when the two met in Las Vegas in April 2001. But he was, largely because of his punch and because Barrera was expected to charge headlong into it. He didn't. Barrera boxed patiently behind a stiff left jab and occasional straight right, and completely undressed Hamed on the way to winning a lopsided unanimous decision.

Naz rips Vuyani Bungu with a right

Manuel Medina soaks up a heavy left



Hamed survives a six-knockdown war with Kevin Kelley

47 ALFONSO ZAMORA

Record: 33-5 (32)

Years Fought: 1973-'80

Titles Held: WBA Bantamweight 1975-'77

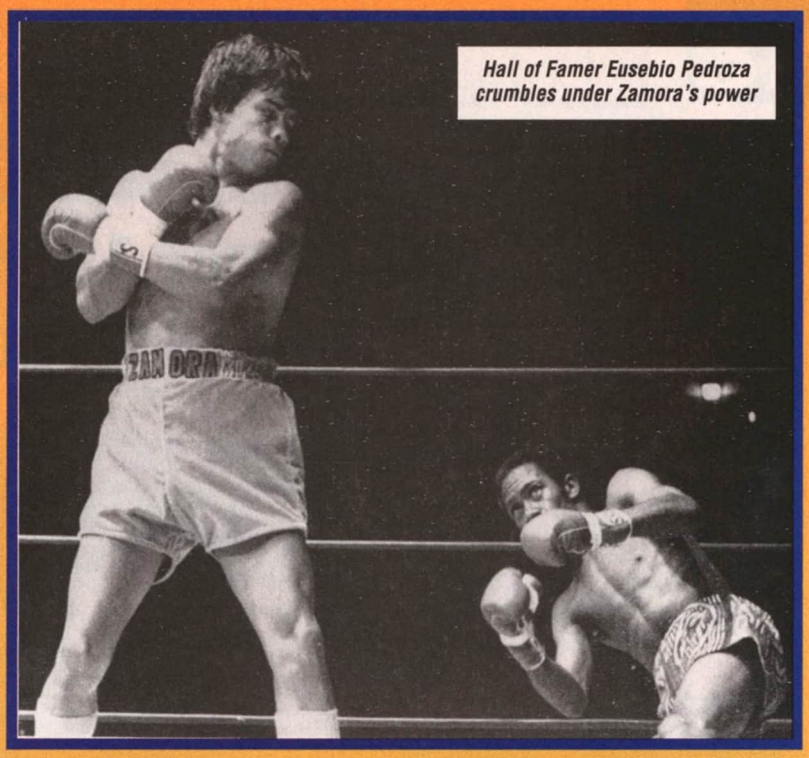
Zamora has Shintaro Echiyama in trouble

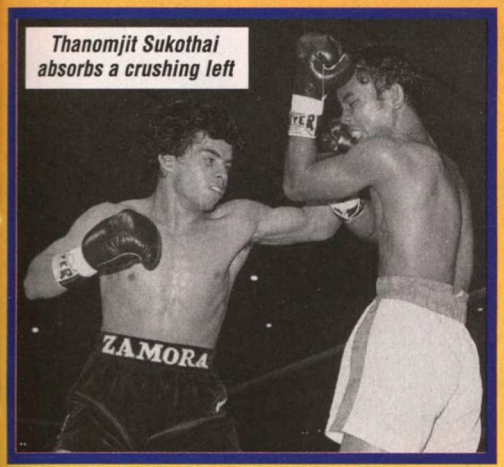
Best Punch: Zamora could knock down a wall with his right hand, but it was his left hook that opponents feared most. He wasn't shy with it—he didn't save it up, waiting for the precise moment to turn it loose. He came at you swinging it like a ball bat and it was up to you to get out of its way. If you didn't and he caught you on the end of it, it was a short night.

Greatest Knockout: In April 1976, Zamora defended against Eusebio Pedroza in Mexico and crushed him, knocking him out in two rounds. Pedroza, of course, would go on to win the WBA featherweight title and make 19 defenses over a seven-year reign.

Statistical Analysis: Did Carlos Zarate ruin Zamora or was Zamora simply a front-runner with incredibly heavy hands? Consider: Before his loss to Zarate, Zamora was 29-0 with every win by knockout. On the average, his fights lasted 3.3

Zamora had the look of a warrior


Hall of Famer Eusebio Pedroza crumbles under Zamora's power



Thanomjit Sukothai absorbs a crushing left

Zamora takes a bantamweight belt from Soo Hwan Hong

rounds. After the loss to Zarate, he went 4-4 with three stops. Three of the four losses were by kayo, and on average his fights went 6.8 rounds.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In November 1977, Zamora jumped all over slippery challenger Jorge Lujan and hurt him several times early. But Lujan survived the onslaught, tired Zamora out, and stopped him in the 10th round to take the title.

Beyond The Punch: Zamora was all about getting guys out of there before they could hit him because if they could hit him, they had a chance of beating him. Generally, he wasn't the kind of guy who would take a beating all night and come back to win by late kayo. The trick was getting to the late rounds, and if your defense was good and you had a good chin and a lot of backbone and some luck, you could get some business done.

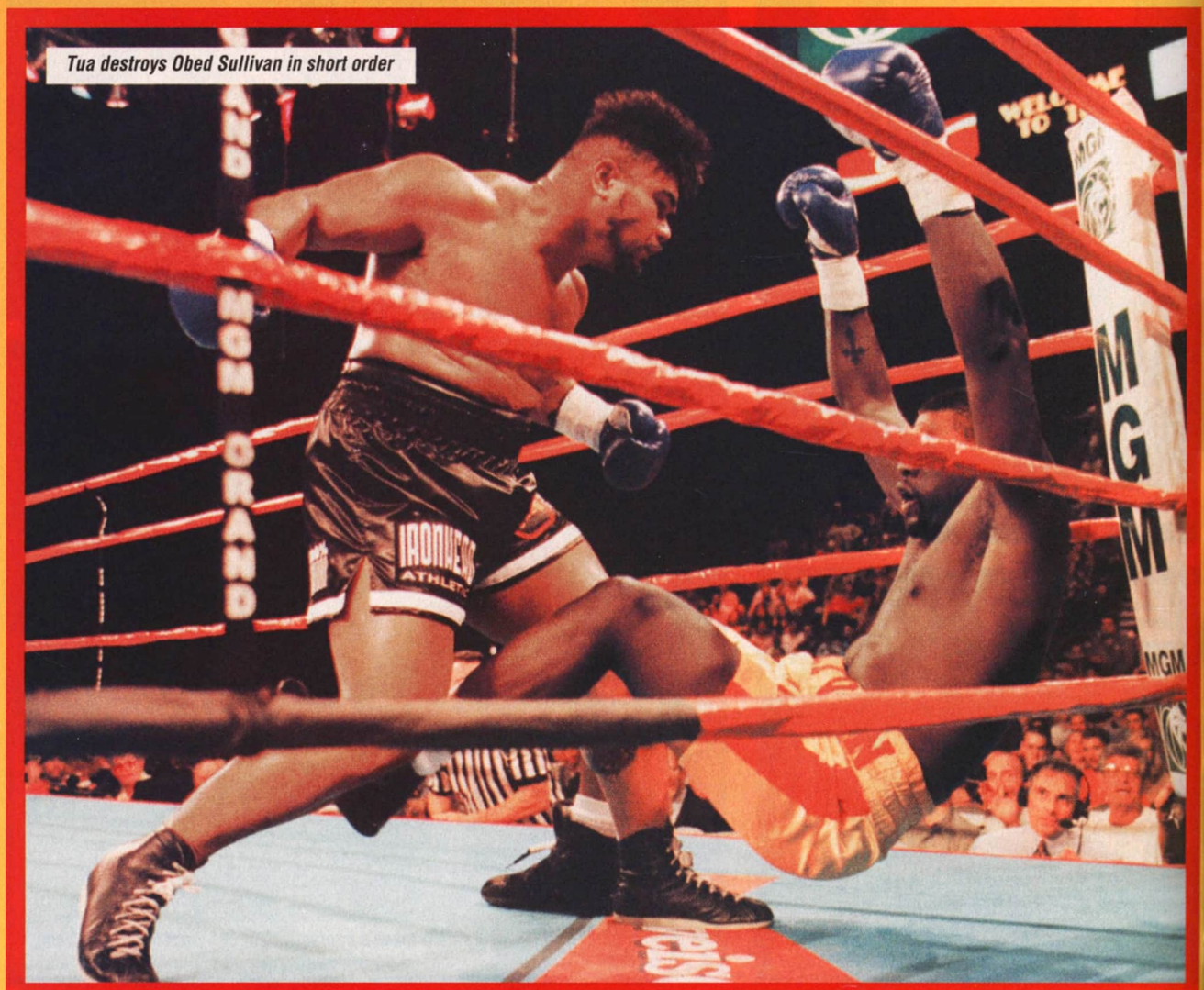
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Zamora was out of his league when he squared off against the brilliant Carlos Zarate in their non-title superfight in April '77 in California. In the third round, Zarate started stepping inside Zamora's wide hooks and beating him to the punch with short, hard blows. He dropped Zamora in the third and twice more in the fourth before it was stopped, bringing a convincing end to maybe the most widely anticipated bantamweight fight ever.

48 DAVID TUA

Record: 42-3-1 (37)

Years Fought: 1992-Present

Titles Held: none



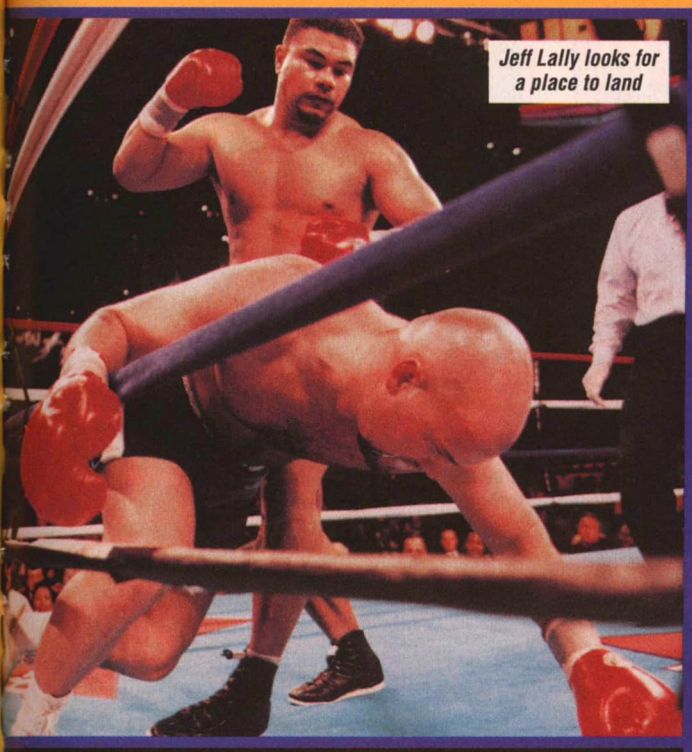
Tua destroys Obed Sullivan in short order

Best Punch: Tua opponents have to worry about just one thing in there: the left hook. Tua doesn't jab much to speak of, the right hand is heavy but normally not a fight-ender—the kayo of Michael Moorer notwithstanding—and Tua punches to the body, too, only to set up the hook to the head. It is as heavy as any hook Joe Frazier ever threw, and if he can land it cleanly he wins.

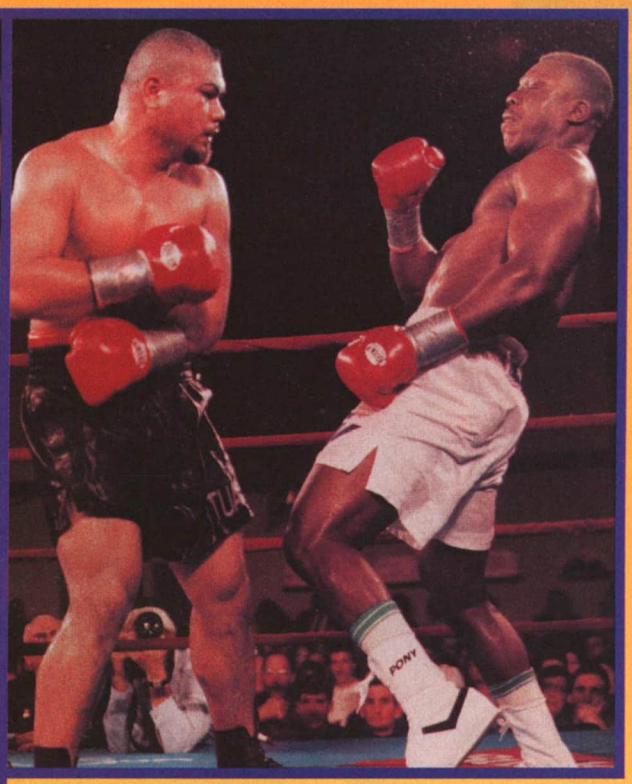
Greatest Knockout: Tua's 19-second kayo of former WBA titleholder John Ruiz doesn't look like any great accomplishment now that we all know Ruiz isn't an especially gifted fighter. But it doesn't matter. It was the most brutal heavyweight kayo since Razor Ruddock nearly killed Michael Dokes, and it marked Tua as the most dangerous big man since pre-Tokyo Mike Tyson.

Statistical Analysis: Tua has scored a kayo in every round except the seventh. Seven of his 37 knockouts have occurred in the sixth round or later, and five of those have come in the eighth round or later, a testament to his unusual later-round kayo power.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Journeyman Jeff Wooden wasn't supposed to give Tua any problems in their March 1998 meeting in Maryland. But Wooden stood in there all



Jeff Lally looks for a place to land



David Izon reels from a left hook

night, landed his share, and withstood some horrific left hooks on the way to losing a hard-fought majority decision.

Beyond The Punch: Guys who can stand at the end of a good jab and move even a little will always trouble Tua. Hell, Oleg Maskaev lasted into the 11th. And too often Tua is too heavy, which drains his wind and slows him down. On the plus side, Tua's chin has been the best in the division for 10 years.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Tua could not have been beaten any more soundly than when Chris Byrd took him to school in August 2001. It's true that Lennox Lewis had also dominated Tua the previous November, but Tua was curiously ill-conditioned that night. He was rock-solid and light for Byrd, but it didn't help, as Byrd's speed and southpaw style gave Tua fits and led to his second loss in three fights.

The Tua hook connects against Ike Ibeabuchi

Tua scores with a right in his second fight with Hasim Rahman

49 CLEVELAND WILLIAMS

Record: 78-13-1 (58)

Years Fought: 1951-'72

Titles Held: none

Williams wraps his hands prior to fighting Alex Miteff

Best Punch: If not for Sonny Liston's fearsome left hook, Williams' straight right might have been the best heavyweight punch of the 1950s and '60s. It wasn't nice and neat like Joe Louis' right was, but it wasn't the clumsy club George Foreman used, either. Williams set it up with a pole-ax of a left jab and brought it over the top, and it's a shame that today all anyone remembers is how Muhammad Ali destroyed him.

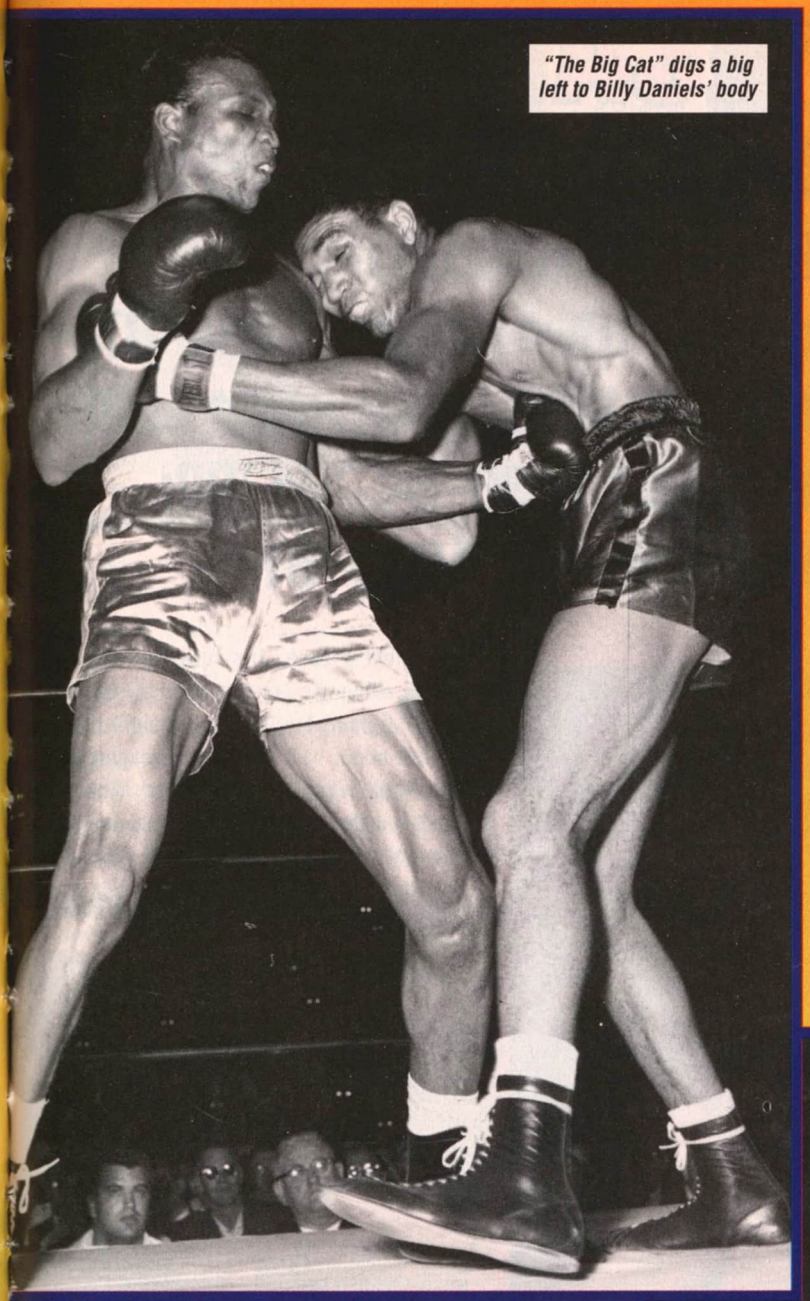
Greatest Knockout: In what was at that time the highest-profile fight he'd had, Williams stopped top contender and future WBA heavyweight beltholder Ernie Terrell in seven rounds in April 1962 in Houston. A year later almost to the day, Terrell returned the favor, decisioning Williams over 10 rounds in Philadelphia.

Statistical Analysis: Williams stopped 21 of his first 22 opponents and did it in an average of three rounds. How's this for living and dying by the sword? Eight of Williams' 13 losses, or 62 percent, were by kayo.

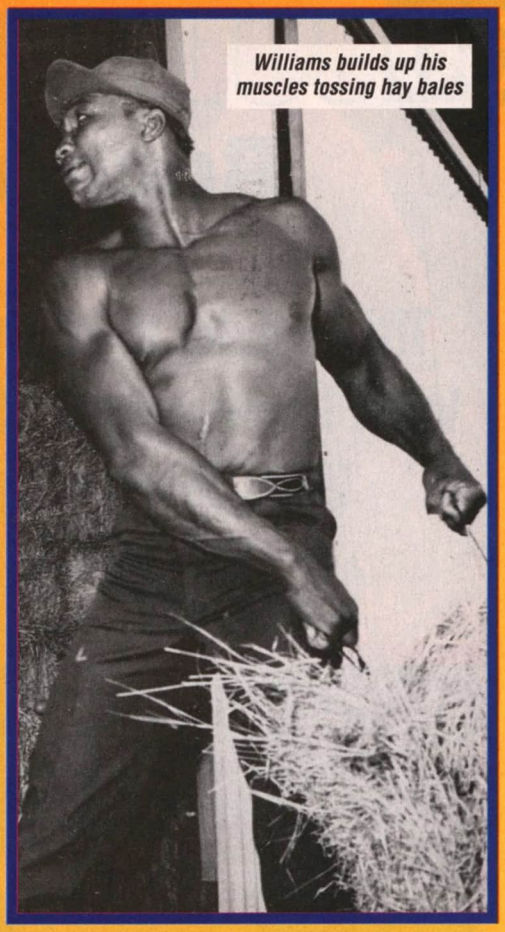
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: No matter what he did, Williams couldn't get it done against Liston, and it wasn't close. Liston was mechanically superior, he hit harder, and he took a better shot than Williams did. He stopped "Big Cat" in the third round in April 1959 in Florida, mostly with bodyshots, and again in March 1960 in two rounds in Williams' home state of Texas.

Beyond The Punch: Williams was a magnificent physical specimen, but he had the chin of a place kicker. He couldn't take it to the body, either. Also, he wasn't terribly nimble in the ring and his hands weren't especially quick. Mechanically, he was adequate. On the plus side, along with his huge punch, he had an elephant-sized heart.

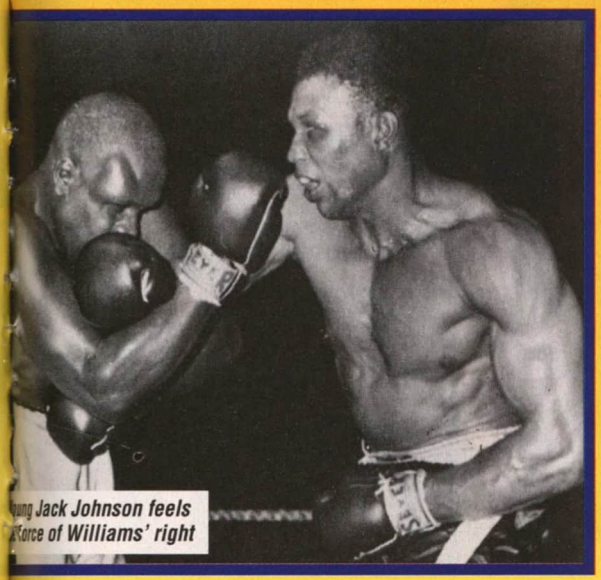
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Even a young Williams would have been tailor-made for Ali. But the 33-year-old stiff Ali destroyed in that famous shellacking in Houston in 1966 wasn't representative of what prime Williams could do. He hadn't been the same since being shot by a Texas state trooper during a traffic stop in late-1964. He was so badly injured it was assumed he'd never fight again. That he was able to come back and put together a modest winning streak to get the Ali fight was noteworthy.



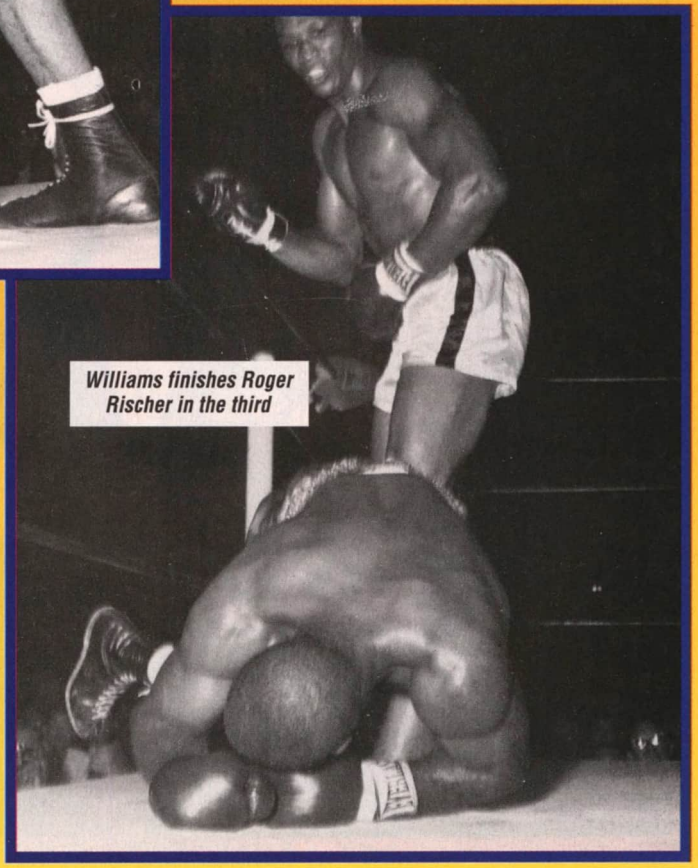
"The Big Cat" digs a big left to Billy Daniels' body



Williams builds up his muscles tossing hay bales



ung Jack Johnson feels force of Williams' right



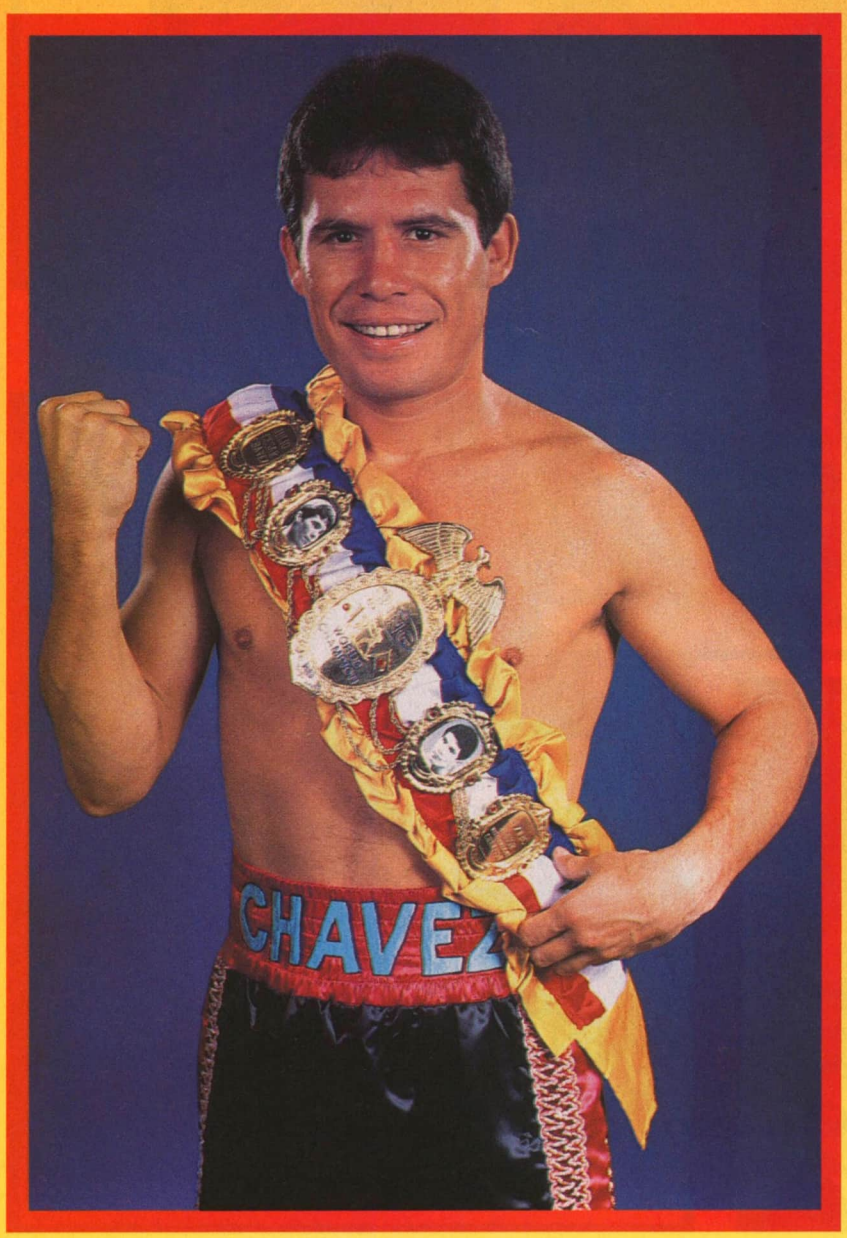
Williams finishes Roger Rischer in the third

50 JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ

Record: 104-5-2 (85)

Years Fought: 1980-2001

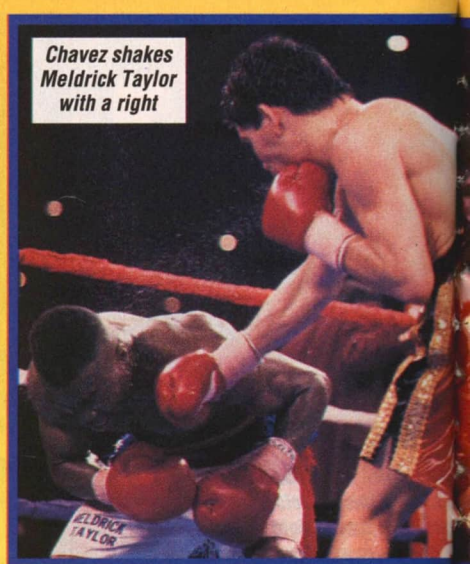
Titles Held: WBC Super Featherweight, 1984-'87; WBA Lightweight 1987-'88; WBC Lightweight 1988; WBC Super Lightweight 1989-'94, '94-'96; IBF Junior Welterweight 1990-'91



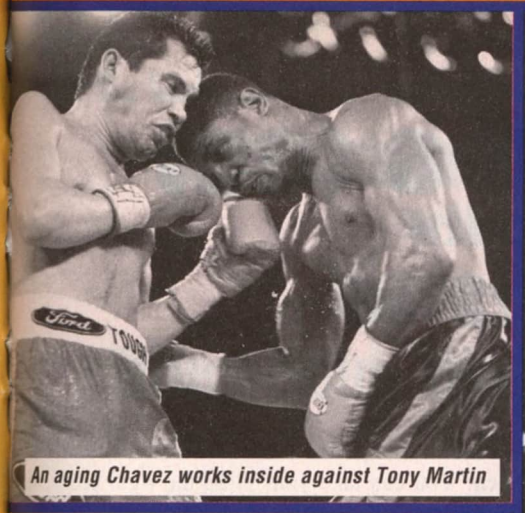
Best Punch: It's blasphemous to say about the greatest ever Mexican prize fighter, but Chavez' straight right, not his left hook, was his most damaging punch. The hook was good too, to both body and head, but the right was both uncannily accurate and unfairly heavy. When it was time for the finish, it was the punch Chavez trusted most.

Greatest Knockout: Chavez was already slightly past his prime when he and Meldrick Taylor fought the best fight of the 1990s. Trailing on points going into the 12th round on St. Patrick's Day 1990, Chavez knew he needed to make something dramatic happen. He did, and Richard Steele, Lou Duva, and Taylor, swollen and bloody, took care of the rest.

Statistical Analysis: Chavez' 77 percent kayo rate is especially noteworthy when you



Chavez shakes Meldrick Taylor with a right

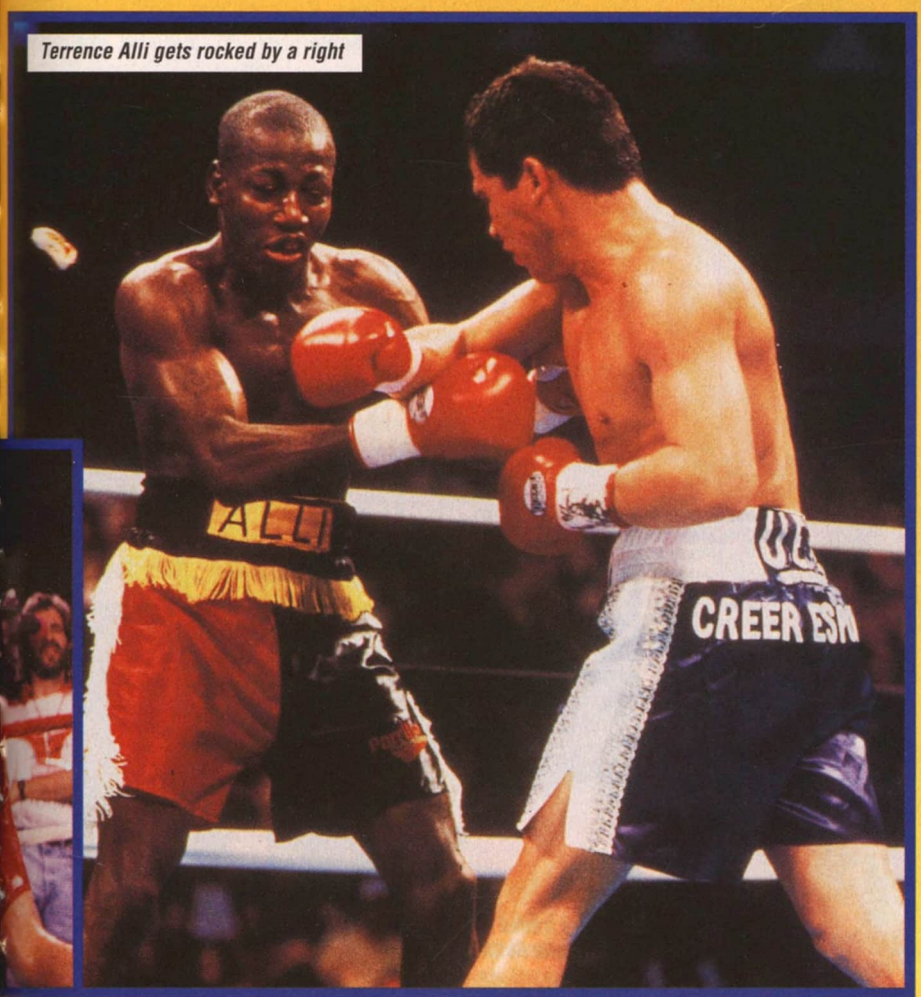


An aging Chavez works inside against Tony Martin

Chavez connects against Jose Luis Ramirez

consider he started at junior lightweight, ended at junior welter, and didn't lose much power as he moved up. His title fight kayo rate at 130 was 60 percent; at 135 it was 67 percent; and at 140 it was 59 percent, but in the latter stages of his reign he was fighting from memory.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Chavez had little trouble finding Frankie Randall's chin in their first match, in January 1994, for the WBC 140-pound title. But Randall shook off Chavez' best right hands and became the first man to floor him and the first to officially beat him. Randall was robbed in their second fight four months later, which Chavez won by technical decision after a headbutt.



Terrence Alli gets rocked by a right

Beyond The Punch: Chavez never was a one-punch kayo artist, but he had heavy, heavy hands and never stopped coming. He also was an excellent and underrated technician, and a superb bodypuncher. When he wanted to play defense he could do that too, and he had one of the best chins of his era. Later on we found out that if you got in front of him and stayed there you could discourage him.

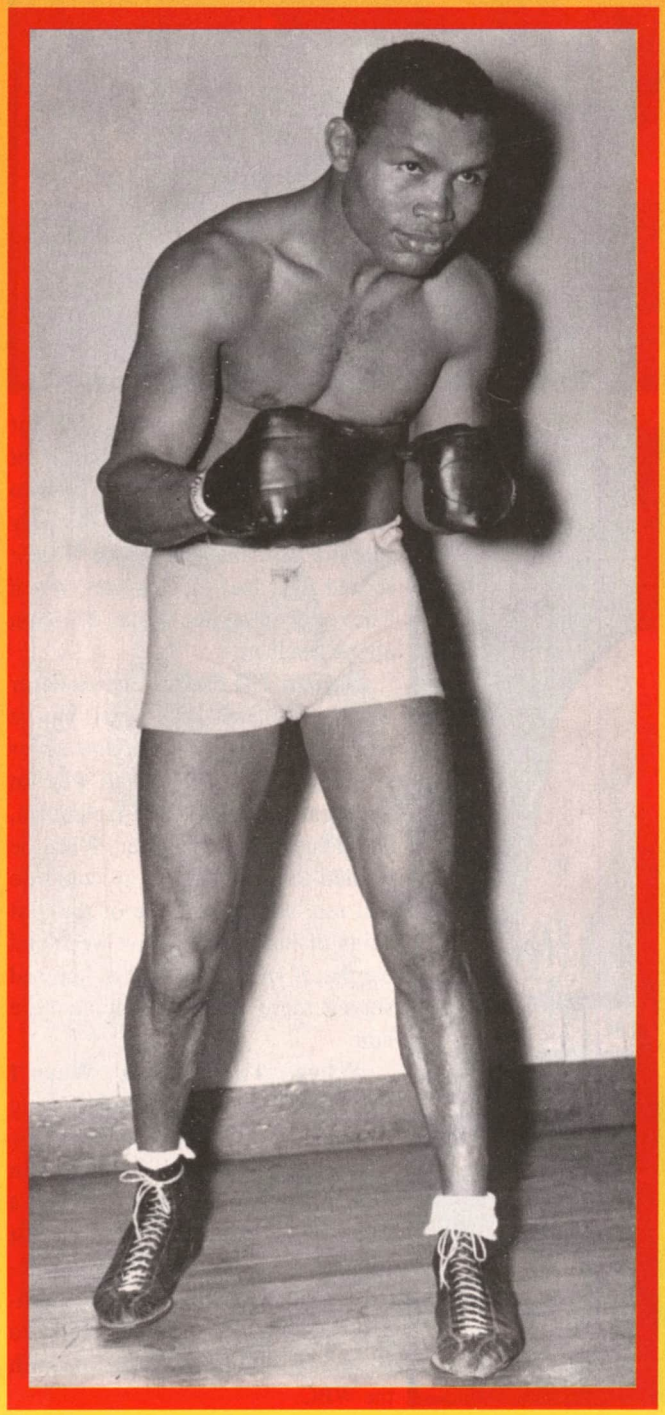
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Chavez was 31 and showing signs of aging when he met fellow living legend Pernell Whitaker in September 1993 in Texas. After a solid first round, Chavez lost at least eight of the next 11 but was nonetheless the happy recipient of a horrendous gift draw that was suspected to be due to his strong association with the WBC.

51 TIGER JACK FOX

Record: 132-20-8 (85)
with 3 no-contests

Years Fought: 1928-'50

Titles Held: none



Best Punch: You can take your pick: the right cross, the uppercut, the left hook—they all stopped guys. We'll go with the right cross, which was Fox's most consistent punch.

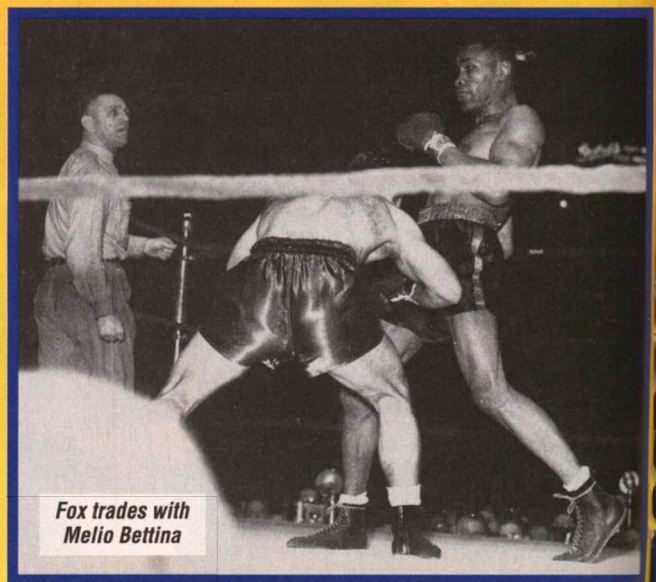
Greatest Knockout: Fox knocked out a young Jersey Joe Walcott in eight rounds in New York in May 1937. The win was no fluke; a month later he decisioned Walcott in Jersey Joe's hometown of Camden, New Jersey.

Statistical Analysis: After his first three fights, Fox was 1-1-1. He then won 17 in a row, 10 by knockout. Over his career, Fox stopped 27 opponents in the first round.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Slapsie Maxie Rosenbloom was stopped just twice in a 299-bout career, and it wasn't by Fox, even though they met three times. Rosenbloom took a decision in October '32, they drew in September '35, and Fox got revenge with a 10-round nod a month later.

Beyond The Punch: They didn't come more awkward than Fox. His stance was all wrong, he threw punches from the floor, and if you didn't see them coming, it was a wonder you passed the pre-fight vision test. Every punch was meant to hurt, and they did when they landed. When they didn't, he was in considerable trouble.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Fox was outclassed in January '36 in Spokane, Washington, when he took on hard-hitting future light heavyweight champion John Henry Lewis. Lewis stopped him in the third round.



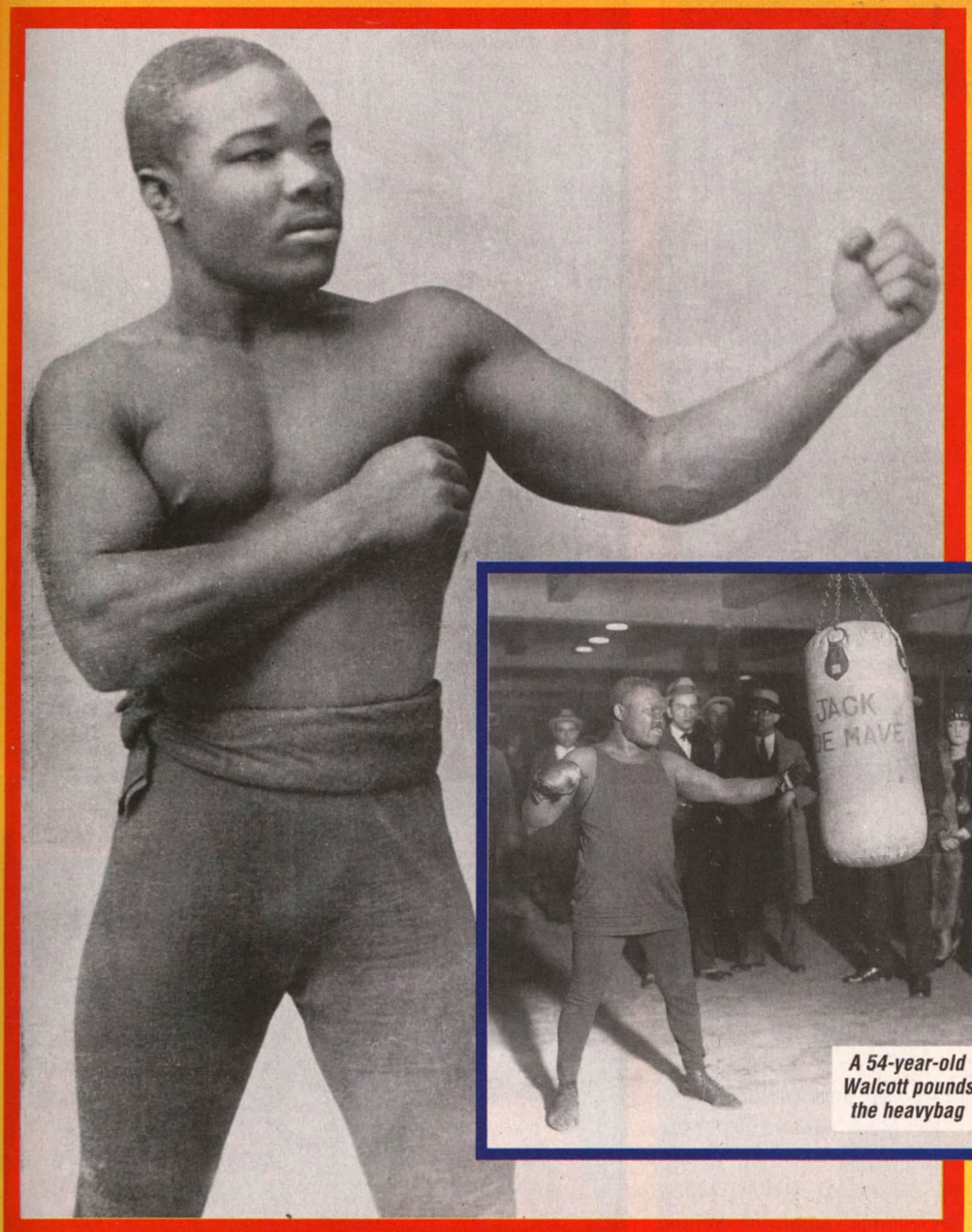
Fox trades with Melio Bettina

52 JOE WALCOTT

Record: 81-25-30 (48)
with 14 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1890-1911

Titles Held: World Welterweight 1901-'04



A 54-year-old Walcott pounds the heavybag

Greatest Knockout: In February 1900 in New York, Walcott stopped in seven rounds the same Joe Choynski who three years earlier had fought to a 20-round draw with bruising future heavyweight champion James J. Jeffries.

Statistical Analysis: Walcott's longest kayo streak was eight fights long, from February 1899 to June '99. Because he took on so many bigger men, the modest kayo percentage (32 percent) is misleading.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Walcott had his hands full with Young Peter Jackson. They fought five times between November '01 and June '04, with Walcott winning only the first, by 20-round decision. The balance: two draws, a six-round no-decision, and in their final meeting, a four-round kayo loss for Walcott.

Beyond The Punch: Walcott was both tenacious and clever in the ring, with fast, excellent feet that let him gain good punching angles on bigger, slower opponents.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Even "The Barbados Demon" had a guy he just couldn't beat: Honey Mellody decisioned a 33-year-old Walcott in a bout for the vacant welterweight title in October 1906 and, the following month, outpointed him again.

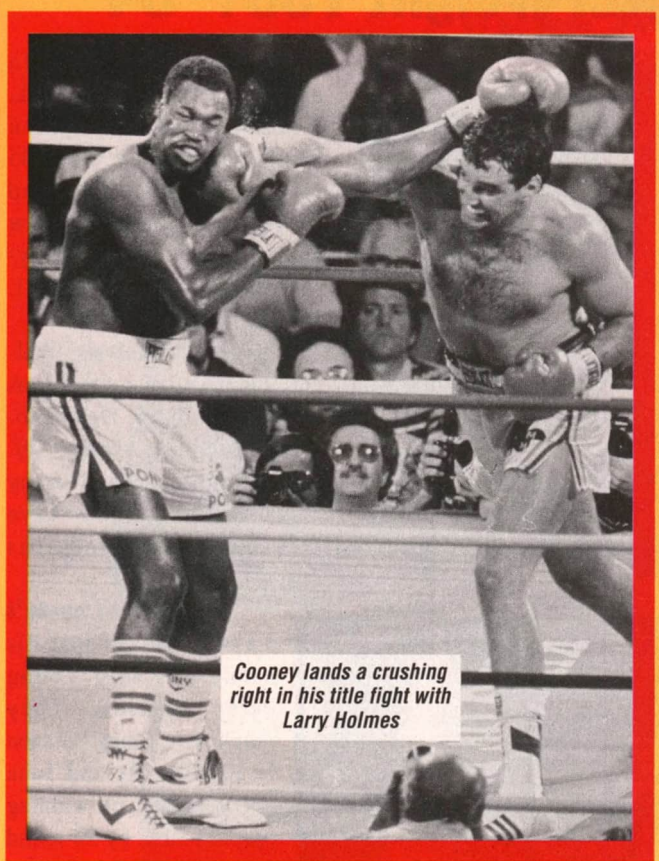
Best Punch: Though he never got bigger than 150 pounds, the 5'1" Walcott's right hand knocked out a good amount of middleweights, light heavies, and heavyweights.

53 GERRY COONEY

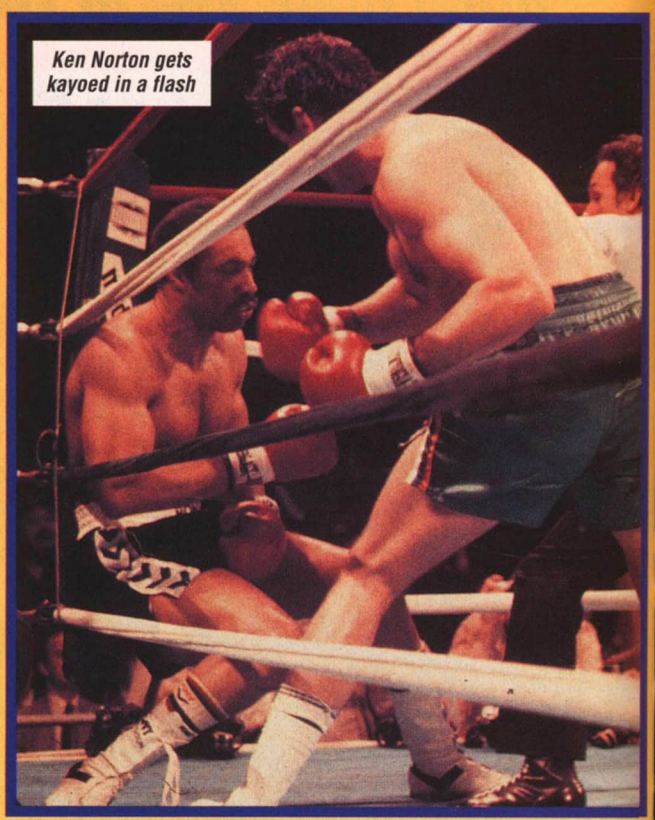
Record: 28-3 (24)

Years Fought: 1977-'90

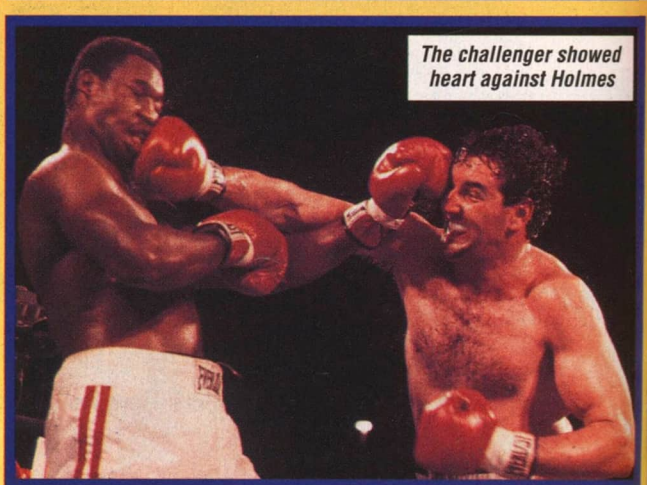
Titles Held: None



Cooney lands a crushing right in his title fight with Larry Holmes



Ken Norton gets kayoed in a flash



The challenger showed heart against Holmes

Best Punch: Say what you want about how Cooney's career turned out relative to the hype, but his wrecking ball of a left hook was arguably the single hardest heavyweight punch of the early-1980s.

Greatest Knockout: Some prefer the May 1981 massacre of Ken Norton, but for our money, Cooney's fourth-round bludgeoning of the still fairly useful Jimmy Young in May '80 in Atlantic City was his most impressive win.

Statistical Analysis: The bad news: Of Cooney's three career losses, 100 percent came by kayo. The good: All were to future Hall of Famers.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In January 1979, a young Cooney took on brawler Eddie "The Animal" Lopez in Florida. Cooney's hook couldn't miss, but Lopez lived up to his nickname and lasted all eight rounds.

Beyond The Punch: Cooney was a crippling puncher, but if you could stand in with him and score, you had a chance. His chin wasn't his strongest feature.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Cooney was in over his head against Larry Holmes in their epic 1982 title fight, but he hung tough until succumbing in the 13th round to Holmes' greater experience.

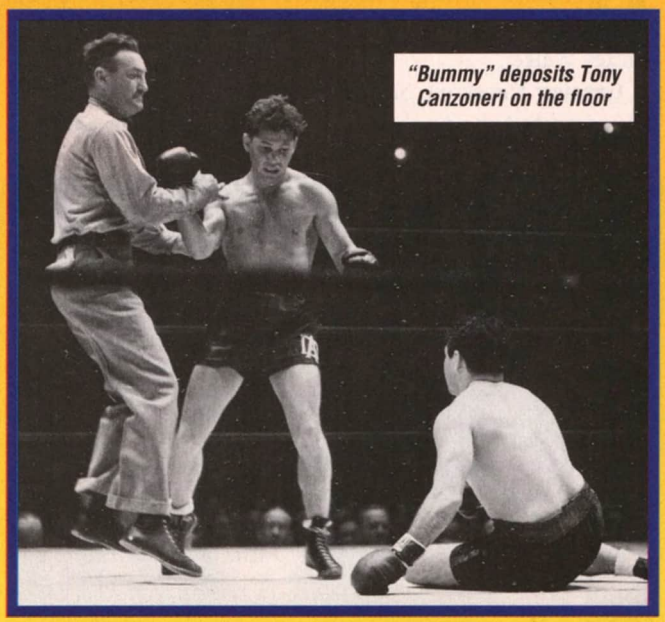
54 AL "BUMMY" DAVIS

Record: 63-10-4 (45)

Years Fought: 1937-'45

Titles Held: none

Davis demolishes Bob Montgomery in just 63 seconds



"Bummy" deposits Tony Canzoneri on the floor

Best Punch: Davis was a wholly average fighter except for two things: his top-to-bottom meanness, and his corker of a left hook, which was one of the better lighter-weight knockout punches of the era.

Greatest Knockout: In February 1944, Davis and his hook ambushed former lightweight champion and future Hall of Famer Bob Montgomery and stopped him in the opening round.

Statistical Analysis: After winning nine straight by knockout in 1937 and '38, Davis went on a cold streak and stopped just four of his next 14 opponents.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: After his shocking win over Montgomery, Davis stepped up again and took on the great Beau Jack in 1944 in New York. Jack decisioned him over 10 rounds.

Beyond The Punch: Davis is recalled most these days as one of the four or five dirtiest fighters ever. His two foulfests with the more accomplished and slightly dirtier Fritzie Zivic are legendary.

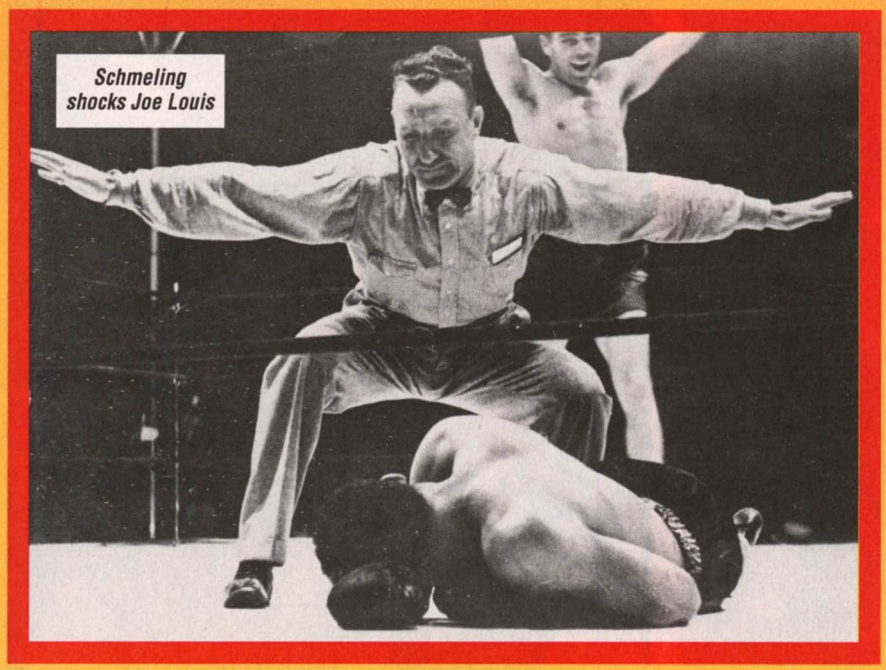
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: As great as Davis' hook was, it was no match for Rocky Graziano's right cross, and in Davis' last fight, in May 1945, Graziano knocked him out in the fourth round.

55 MAX SCHMELING

Record: 56-10-4 (39)

Years Fought: 1924-'48

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1930-'32



Schmeling shocks Joe Louis

Best Punch: Schmeling's straight right took out many of the better heavyweights of the era, such as Johnny Risko and Young Stribling, and also all-time great middleweight Mickey Walker.

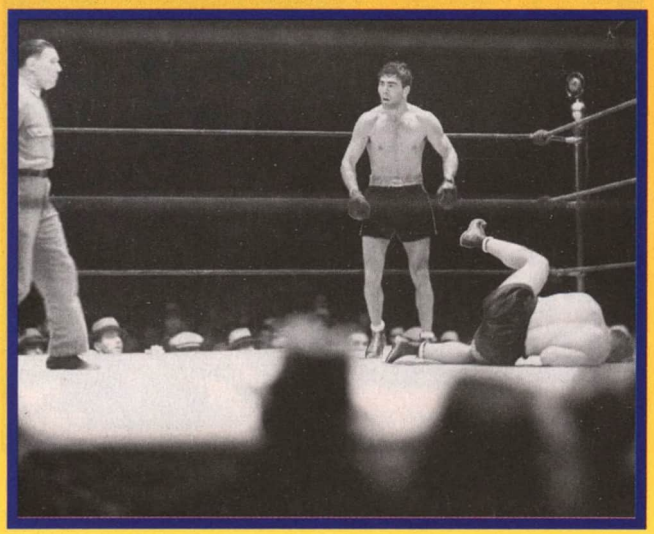
Greatest Knockout: Schmeling was a 10-1 underdog and considered washed up when he took on undefeated phenom Joe Louis in June 1936. Countering Louis' jab throughout, he floored "The Brown Bomber" in the fourth, battered him, and stopped him in the 12th round.

Statistical Analysis: A full 80 percent of Schmeling's fights took place in Germany, where his kayo rate was 59 percent. Outside Germany it was 50 percent.

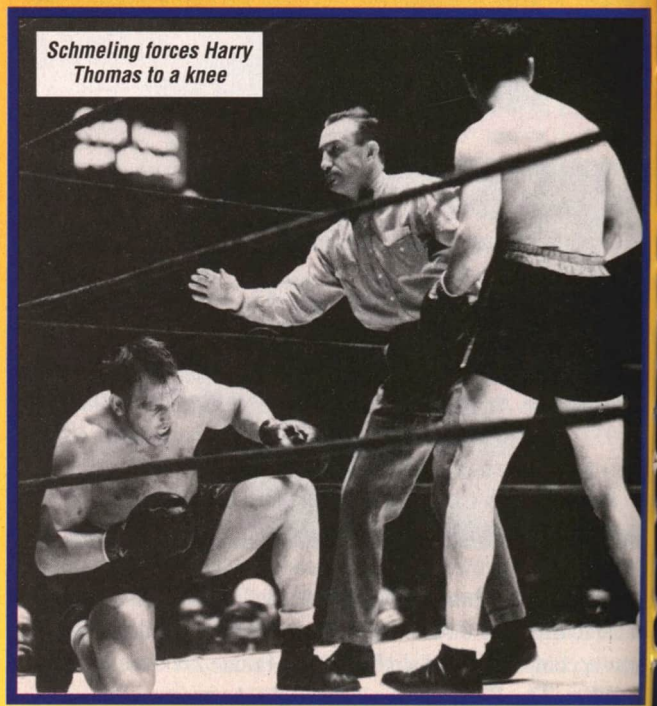
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Paolino Uzcudun couldn't beat Schmeling, but he went the distance with him all three times and in May 1934 held him to a draw.

Beyond The Punch: What Schmeling did best was lay back and look for opportunities to shoot the right over his opponent's left hand. If you took that away, you were halfway home. Not a lot of guys were able to.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Things being what they were, Schmeling didn't stand a chance against Louis in their monumentally important rematch in June 1938 and was obliterated in the opening round.



Mickey Walker proves unable to handle the German's power



Schmeling forces Harry Thomas to a knee

56 FLORENTINO FERNANDEZ

Record: 49-16 (42)

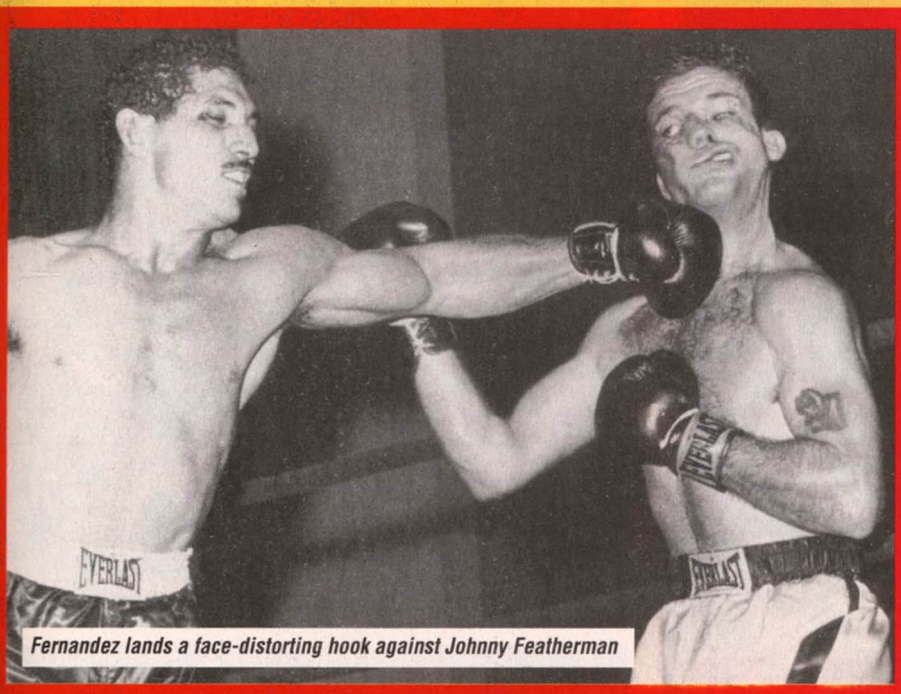
Years Fought: 1956-'72

Titles Held: none

Best Punch: Fernandez' left hook was maybe the single hardest punch in the middleweight division in the 1960s. It was a wrecking ball.

Greatest Knockout: In May 1963, Fernandez traveled to Puerto Rico and in five hellish rounds knocked out future light heavyweight champion and Hall of Famer Jose Torres—the only kayo loss in Torres' 11-year career.

Statistical Analysis: In his first 21 fights, Fernandez scored 18 knockouts. In his next 21, he scored just 12, but those fights were mostly against the world's best middleweights.

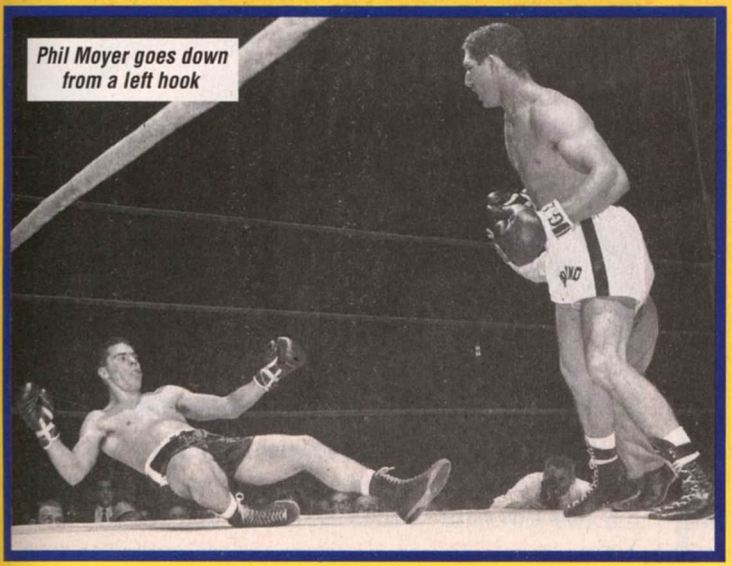


Fernandez lands a face-distorting hook against Johnny Featherman

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Fernandez had his moments against future two-division champion and Hall of Fame member Emile Griffith in their fight in New York in August 1960. But Griffith had a legendary chin, and he handled Fernandez' power and took a 10-round decision.

Beyond The Punch: Fernandez only cared about landing the left hook and he wasn't that great about taking punches back; he was stopped 10 times.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: A lot of people thought Fernandez got the better of NBA middleweight champion Gene Fullmer in their meeting in August '61, but it was in Utah, and Fullmer escaped with a split decision win.


Phil Moyer goes down from a left hook

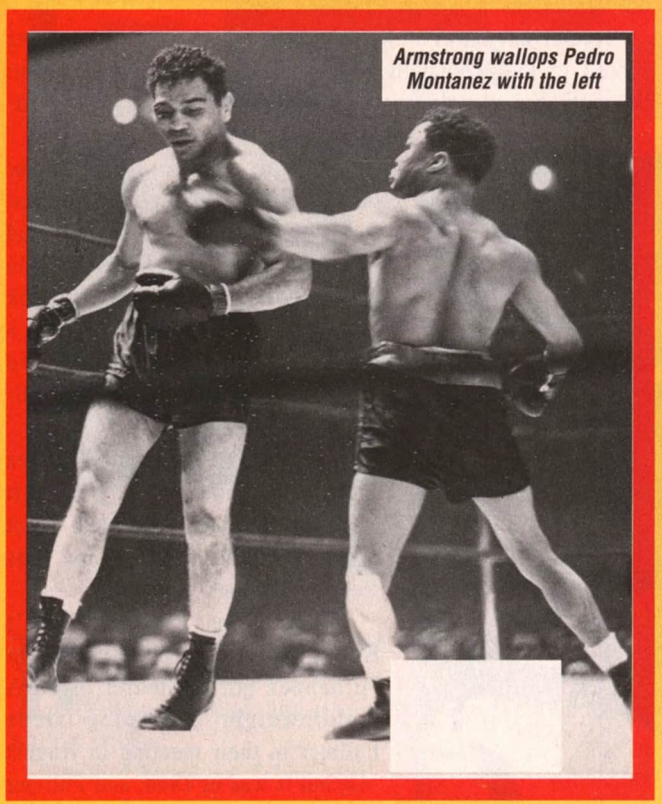
Gaspar Ortega learns that Fernandez hits hard below the belt as well

57 HENRY ARMSTRONG

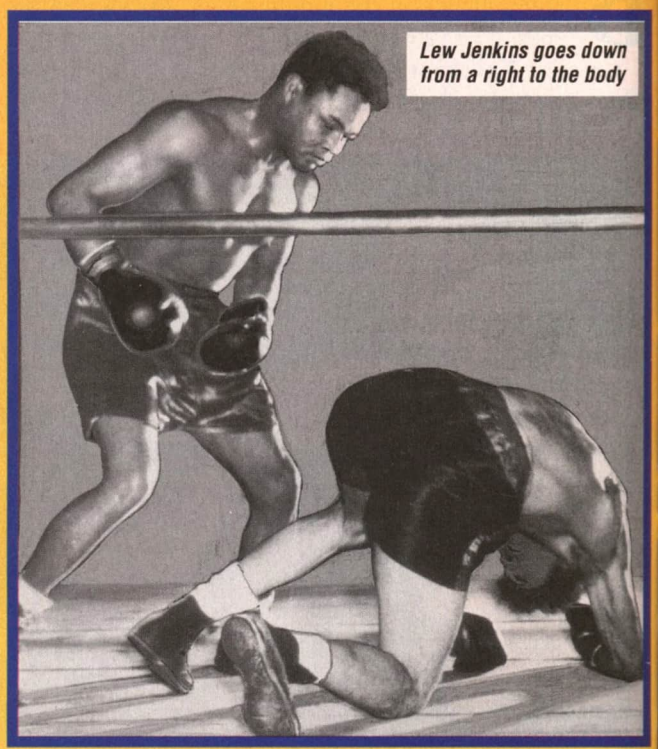
Record: 151-21-9 (101)

Years Fought: 1931-'45

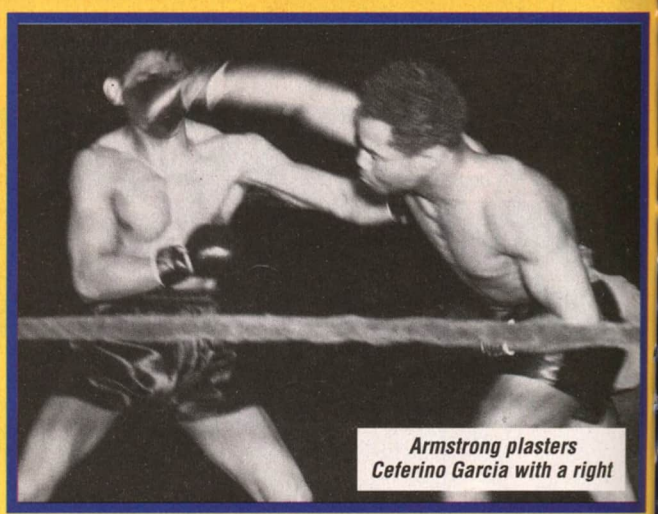
Titles Held: World Featherweight 1937-'38; World Lightweight 1938-'39; World Welterweight 1938-'40



Armstrong wallops Pedro Montanez with the left



Lew Jenkins goes down from a right to the body



Armstrong plasters Ceferino Garcia with a right

Best Punch: Armstrong threw so many punches so rapidly and so well that sometimes it was difficult to distinguish one from the next. Call it the right uppercut, which Armstrong used to wonderful effect while on the inside.

Greatest Knockout: Poor outgunned Petey Sarron. He never knew what hit him when Armstrong climbed all over him and stopped him in the sixth to win the featherweight world title in October 1937.

Statistical Analysis: From April 1937 to March '38, Armstrong stopped 27 straight opponents in an average of just less than four rounds.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Armstrong went 52 hard rounds over five fights with the historically underrated Baby Arizmendi and couldn't put him away. In fact, he lost their first two meetings.

Beyond The Punch: Armstrong was a relentless, tireless swarmer who wore guys down and busted them up with heavy, non-stop punches from all angles. Think Aaron Pryor cubed.

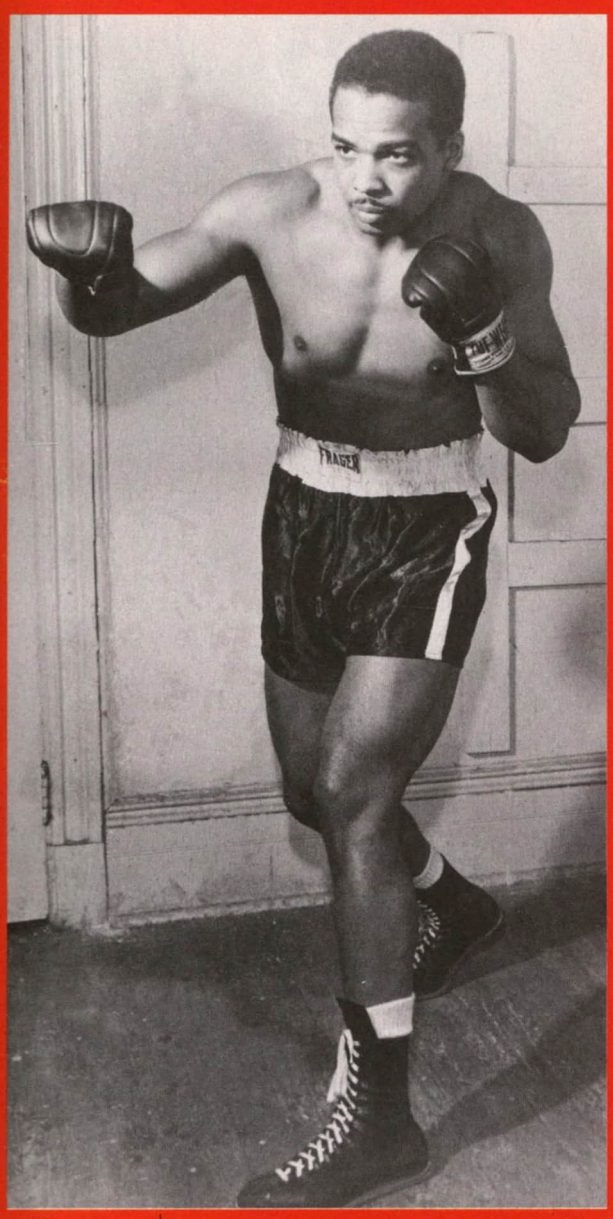
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Armstrong was well past his best days in August 1943 when a young welterweight named Ray Robinson carried and decisioned him over 10 rounds in New York.

58 BOB SATTERFIELD

Record: 50-25-5 (35)

Years Fought: 1945-'57

Titles Held: none



Best Punch: With Satterfield, there was no such thing as setting a guy up. He threw every punch to tear your head off. The one he threw the hardest was the left hook.

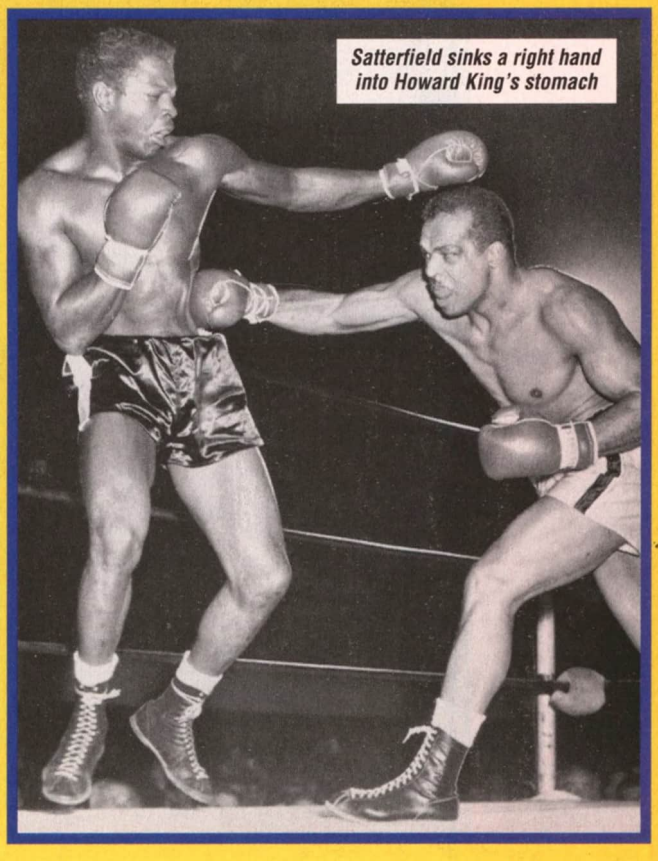
Greatest Knockout: In a dynamite meeting of sluggers in June 1954 in Florida, Satterfield starched murderous-punching Cleveland Williams in three rounds.

Statistical Analysis: Of Satterfield's 25 career losses, 13, or 52 percent, were by kayo. Among the noteworthy conquerors: Archie Moore, Jake LaMotta, and Rex Layne. One year into his career, his record was 12-1-1 (12), giving him a lofty 86 percent kayo rate.

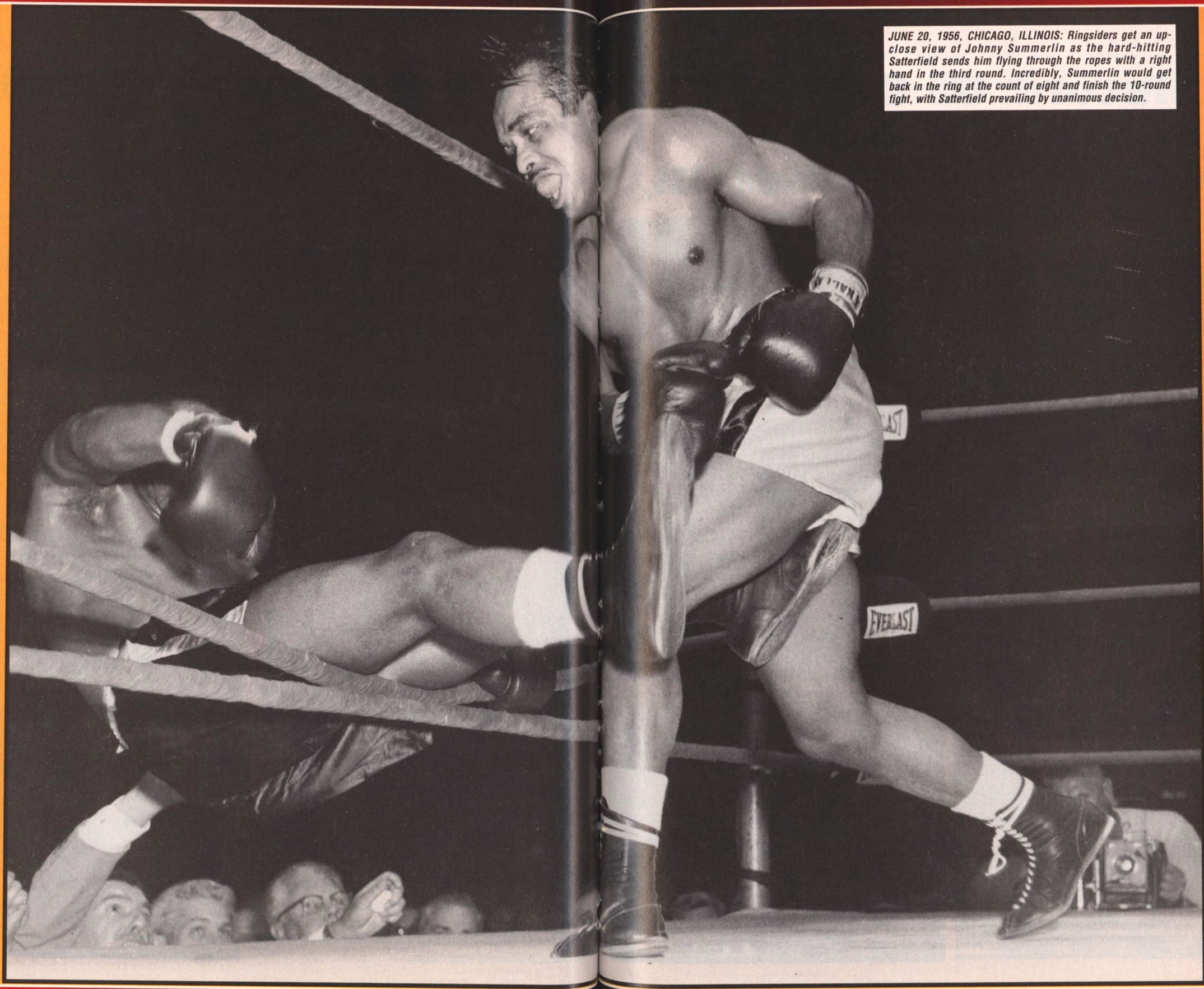
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Satterfield fought the wonderful Harold Johnson three times and though he decisioned him in their first meeting (somewhat shockingly), he was knocked cold in the second, and outpointed in the third.

Beyond The Punch: Satterfield threw so many hard punches early in a fight that he often burned himself out early and then collapsed as soon as he caught something back. But for the first few rounds he was hell.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Satterfield might have gotten a shot at heavyweight champion Rocky Marciano had he been able to get past former champion Ezzard Charles in their January 1954 showdown in Illinois. Instead, Charles weathered Satterfield's first-round assault and stretched him in the second.



Satterfield sinks a right hand into Howard King's stomach



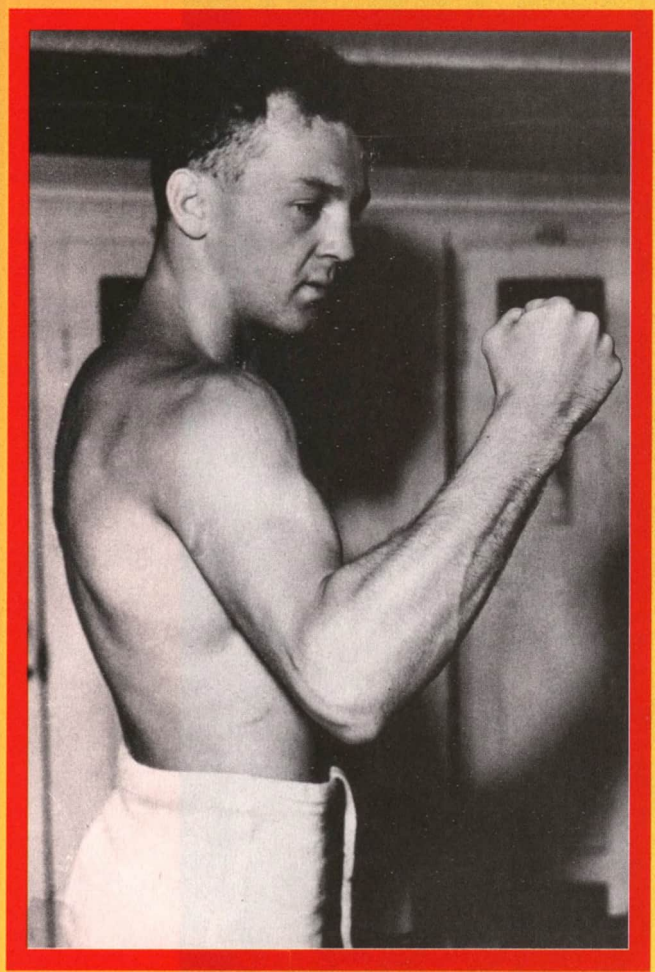
JUNE 20, 1956, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS: Ringsiders get an up-close view of Johnny Summerlin as the hard-hitting Satterfield sends him flying through the ropes with a right hand in the third round. Incredibly, Summerlin would get back in the ring at the count of eight and finish the 10-round fight, with Satterfield prevailing by unanimous decision.

59 AL HOSTAK

Record: 65-9-11 (43)

Years Fought: 1932-'49

Titles Held: NBA World Middleweight 1938, 1939-'40



Best Punch: Hostak's left hook was a bomb that terrorized all but the very best middleweights throughout the 1940s.

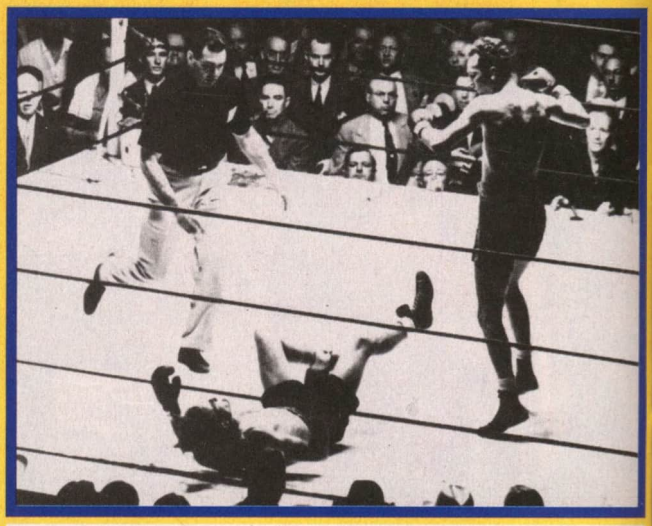
Greatest Knockout: Hostak won the title in July 1938 with a terrific first-round knockout of champion Freddie Steele in Seattle. It was one of just three kayo losses in Steele's 144-bout career.

Statistical Analysis: After going the distance in seven straight fights in 1935 and '36, Hostak stopped 17 of his next 18 opponents.

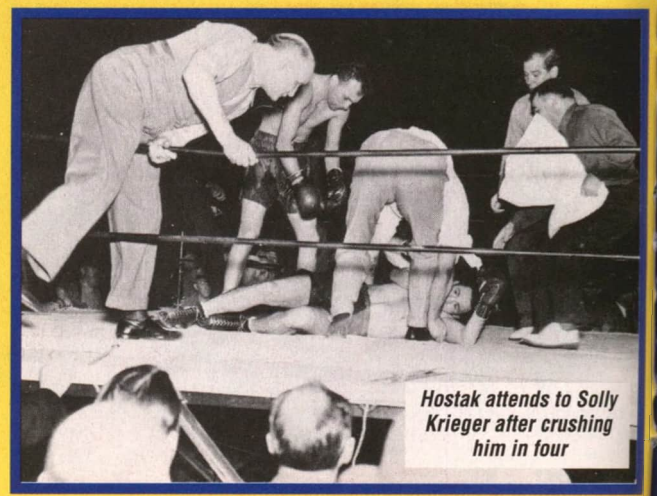
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Hostak couldn't find the sweet spot against future heavyweight contender Harry "Kid" Matthews; Matthews outpointed him in September 1942 in Seattle and fought him to a draw two months later.

Beyond The Punch: Despite fragile hands, Hostak was tenacious in the ring. Jack Dempsey, who refereed Hostak's stoppage of Steele, called him one of the greatest hitters he'd ever seen.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Hostak was no match for Tony Zale. They met twice in 1940 and once in '41; Zale beat him on points over 10 in Chicago, stopped him for the title in 13 in Seattle, and then knocked him out in two rounds in Chicago in defense of the belt.



Hostak wipes out middleweight champ Freddie Steele in one round



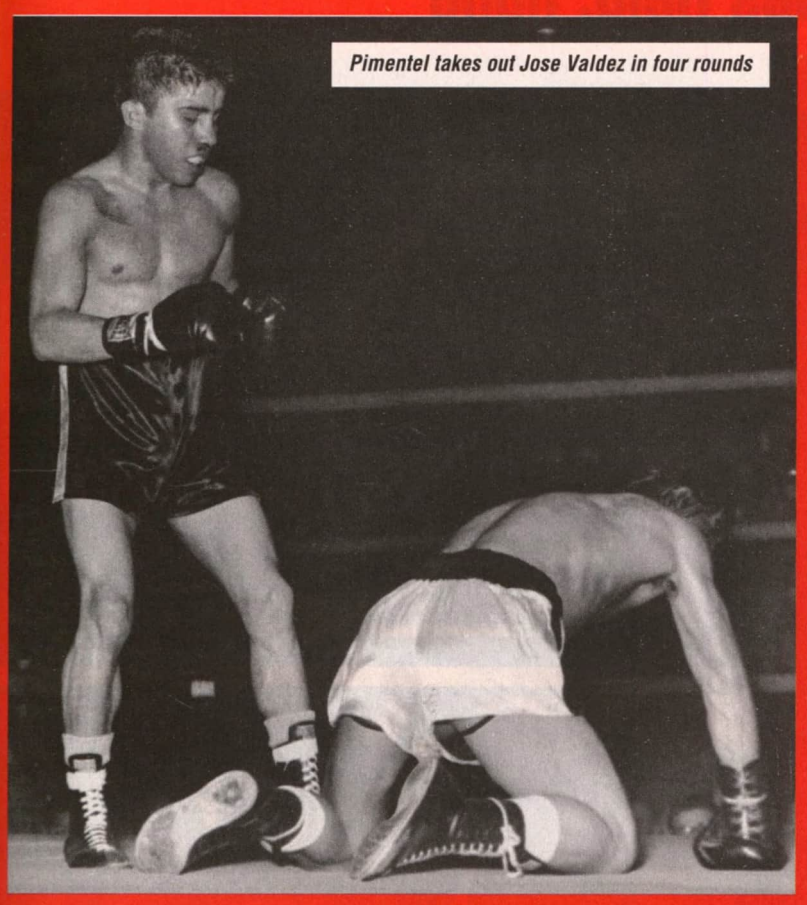
Hostak attends to Solly Krieger after crushing him in four

60 JESUS PIMENTEL

Record: 81-7 (72)

Years Fought: 1960-'71

Titles Held: none



Pimentel takes out Jose Valdez in four rounds

Best Punch: Pimentel was a horrific puncher whose hook to the liver terrorized the bantamweight division for nearly a decade.

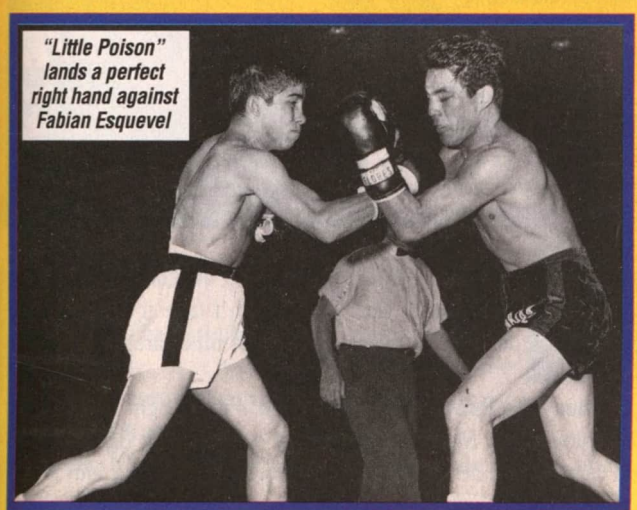
Greatest Knockout: Pimentel collided with fellow puncher and Mexican hero Jose "Portillo" Lopez in Los Angeles in August 1963. In a wild slugfest that saw both fighters land bombs, Lopez went down and out in the eighth.

Statistical Analysis: Between August '61 and August '64, Pimentel stopped 28 straight opponents in an average of less than four rounds. His final kayo rate is 82 percent. For perspective, Ruben Olivares, who generally is recognized as the hardest-hitting bantamweight ever, finished his career with a kayo rate of 75 percent.

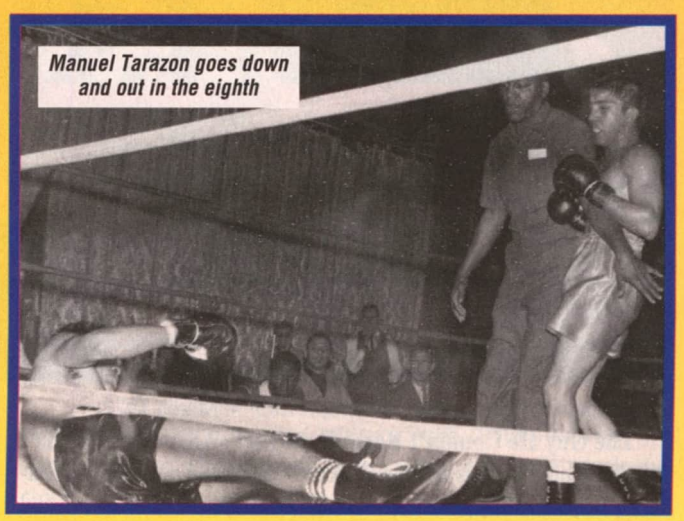
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Future bantamweight champion Jesus "Chucho" Castillo befuddled and outboxed Pimentel in Los Angeles in June 1968 and outpointed him over 12 rounds.

Beyond The Punch: A long-armed banger with good skills, Pimentel mixed his attack well and was an outstanding finisher.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In the last fight of his career, a fairly used-up Pimentel was stopped in the 11th round by Olivares in California in December '71. It was Pimentel's only shot at a world title.



"Little Poison" lands a perfect right hand against Fabian Esquevel



Manuel Tarazon goes down and out in the eighth

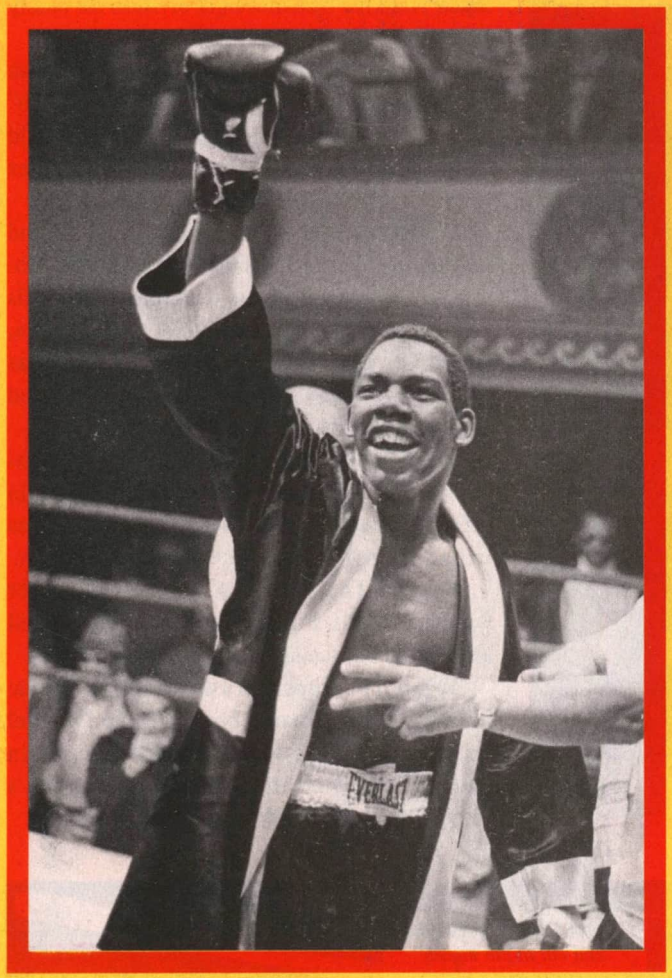
61 EUGENE "CYCLONE" HART

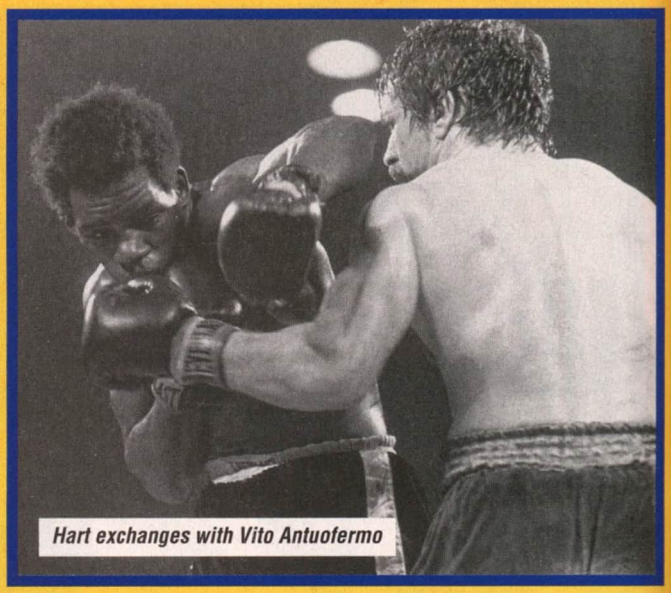
Record: 30-9-1 (28)

with 1 no-contest

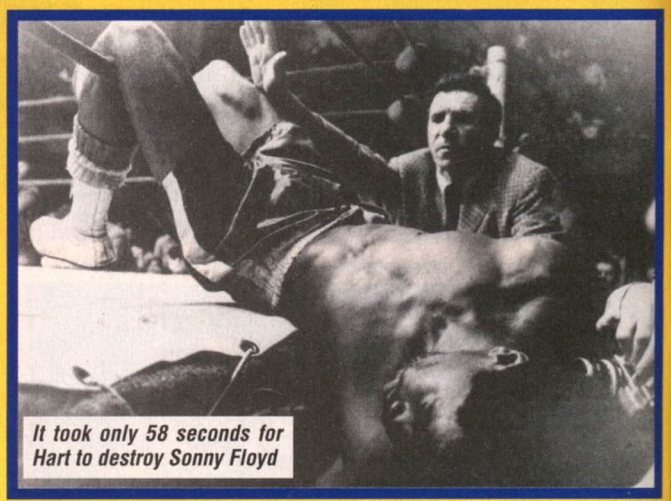
Years Fought: 1969-'82

Titles Held: none





Hart exchanges with Vito Antuofermo



It took only 58 seconds for Hart to destroy Sonny Floyd

Best Punch: Hart had a monster of a Philadelphia left hook, and if he caught you with it, chances were good you were going to sleep.

Greatest Knockout: In his breakout fight, Hart blew out Philadelphia legend Kitten Wayward in a single round in The City of Brotherly Love in May 1971.

Statistical Analysis: Hart was 22-0 with one no-contest and 21 knockouts—a 91 percent kayo rate—when he suffered his first loss, a kayo to Nate Collins at the Spectrum in March 1972.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Even Hart's killer hook couldn't break the nut that was Bennie Briscoe's hard head on the two occasions they met. They drew in November 1975 in Philadelphia, and Briscoe stopped him in the first in April '76, also in Philadelphia.

Beyond The Punch: Hart just couldn't take it as well as he could dish it out, which is why eight of his nine career losses were by knockout.

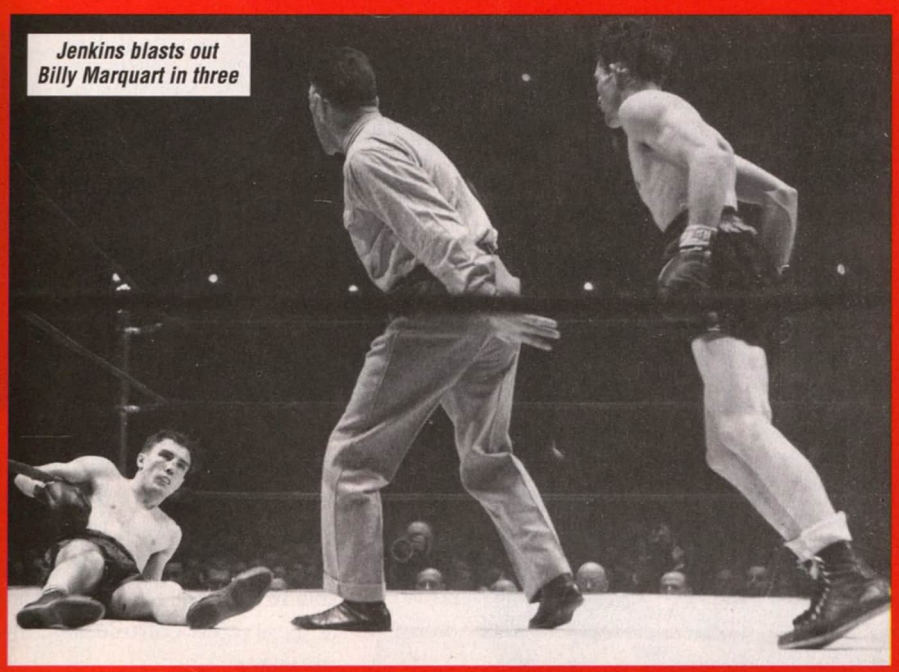
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Future light heavyweight champion Eddie Mustafa Muhammad was only 10 fights into his pro career when he proved too good for Hart, stopping him in four rounds in New York in August 1974.

62 LEW JENKINS

Record: 65-39-5 (46)

Years Fought: 1935-'50

Titles Held: World Lightweight 1940-'41



Jenkins blasts out Billy Marquart in three

Jenkins' big right hand rattles Lou Ambers

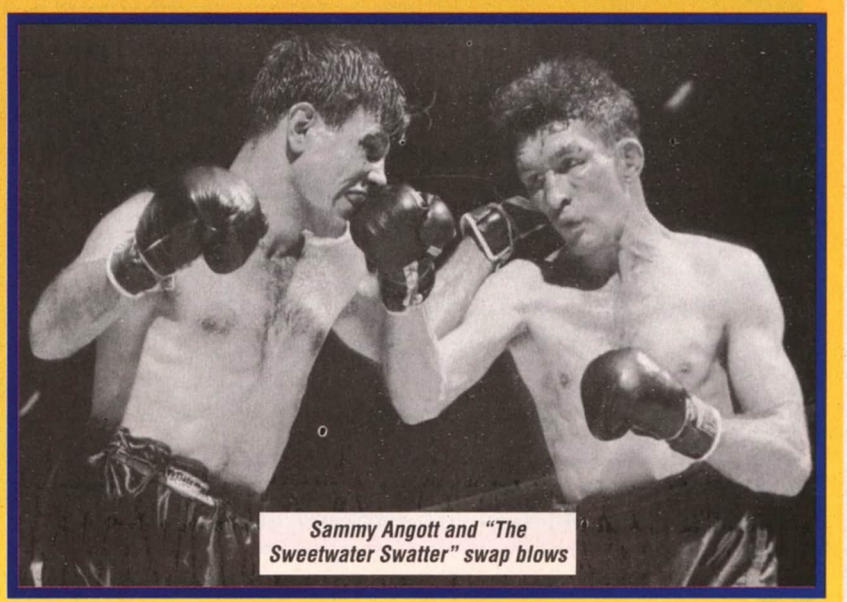
Best Punch: From mid-1939 to late-'40 (his true prime), Jenkins possessed one of the best right hands in lightweight history.

Greatest Knockout: Jenkins was a 4-1 underdog going into his title bout with cement-chinned Lou Ambers in May 1940 in New York. Ambers was riding a 15-bout win streak. Jenkins blew him out in the third round to win the title.

Statistical Analysis: In typically streaky fashion, Jenkins lost nine of 10 fights after losing the title, then stopped 13 of his next 19 opponents.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Jenkins twice met the great Fritzie Zivic and could earn only a draw and a kayo loss. He wasn't alone; Zivic suffered just two stoppage losses in his 233-bout career.

Beyond The Punch: Jenkins hardly trained a day in his life, so if a guy lasted into the middle rounds with him, or better yet went to his body, he usually beat him.



Sammy Angott and "The Sweetwater Swatter" swap blows

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Jenkins was feeling brave after whipping Ambers for the title and took on Henry Armstrong in a non-title bout in New York in July '40. Armstrong overwhelmed him with a prodigious body attack and stopped him in the sixth round.

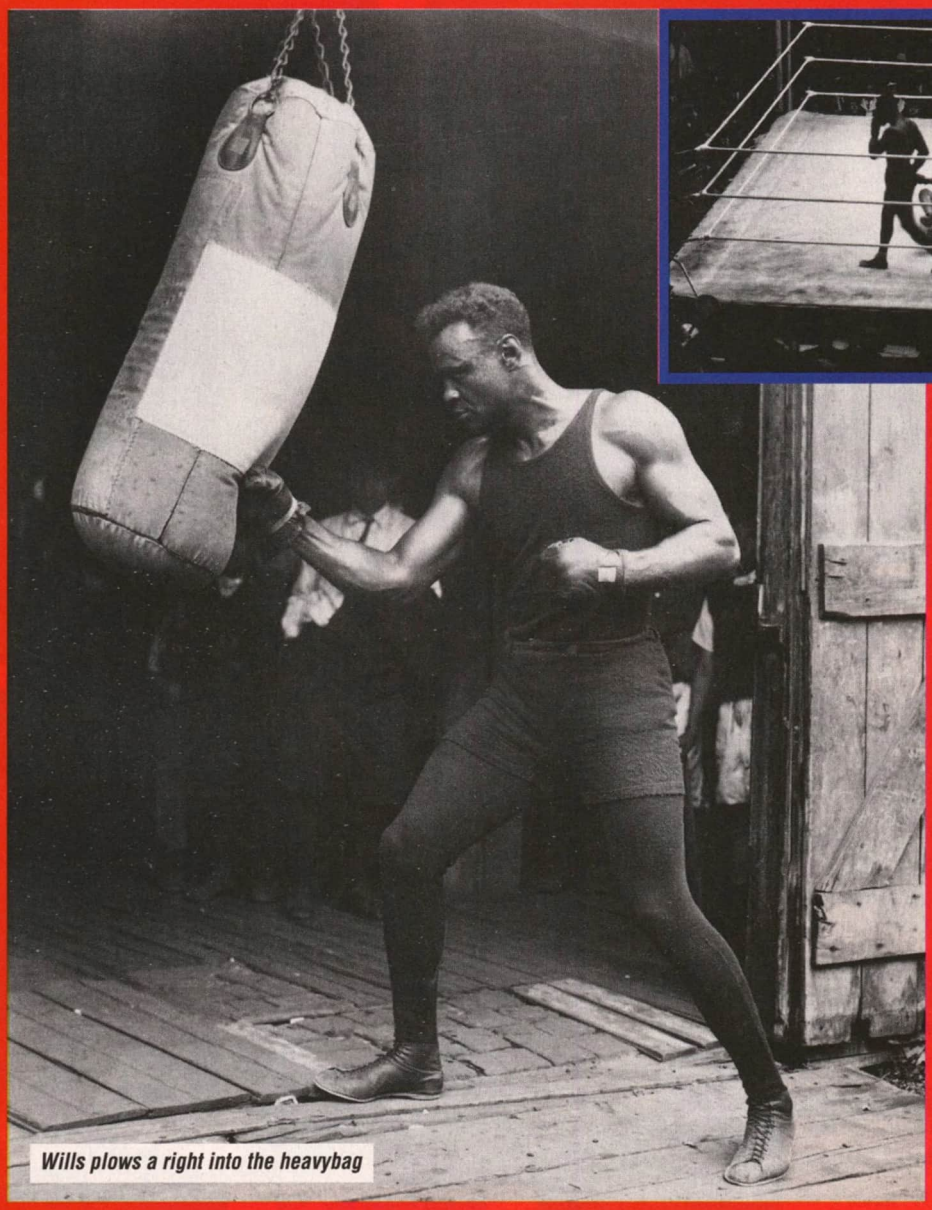
63 HARRY WILLS

Record: 64-8-1 (46)

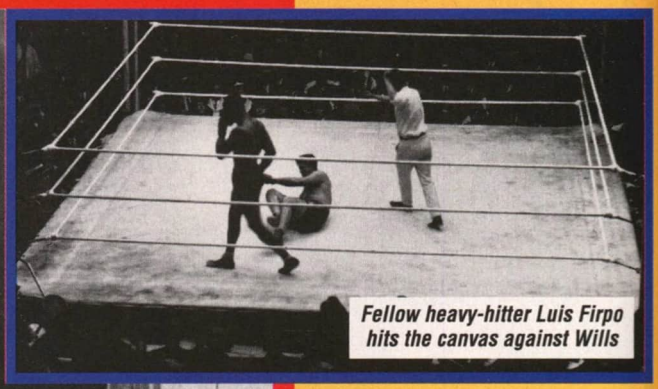
with 23 no-decisions & 3 no-contests

Years Fought: 1910-'32

Titles Held: none



Wills plows a right into the heavybag



Fellow heavy-hitter Luis Firpo hits the canvas against Wills

Best Punch: Wills stood right in front of guys and let them run into his right cross, which was a hammer of a blow. Some wonder still what it might have done to Jack Dempsey.

Greatest Knockout: In the 11th of his 18 meetings with rival Sam Langford, Wills scored a knockout in the sixth round, in Panama City in April 1918. It was the first of only two times he was able to stop Langford, over whom he enjoyed a considerable size advantage.

Statistical Analysis: Wills' 46 knockouts were achieved in an average of 3.1 rounds. His longest kayo streak was six; his longest no-decision streak was five.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In three fights and 28 rounds, Wills couldn't stop rival Joe Jeannette. All three no-decision bouts went the distance.

Beyond The Punch: Wills frequently is grouped with Langford, as both were greats who never became champions. But he wasn't the skilled boxer-puncher Langford was. He was slow, ponderous, and right there to be hit. But he was 6'3", 220 pounds, and a damn good puncher. So he overpowered many of the guys in the era.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Nearing the end of his career, Wills was emphatically stopped in the fourth round by Paolino Uzcudun in New York in July '27.

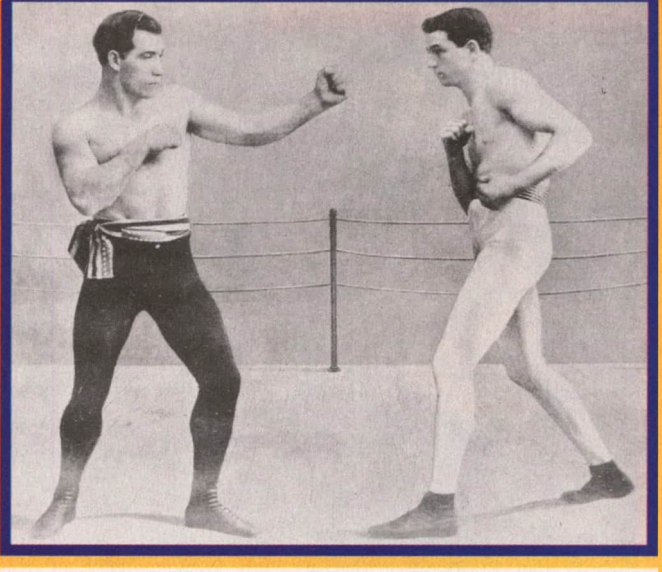
64 TOM SHARKEY

Record: 41-6-5 (37)

with 3 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1893-1904

Titles Held: none



Sharkey with Kid McCoy, whom he'd go on to kayo in the 10th

Best Punch: Sharkey's punches all were thrown the same way: looping, roundhouse, and capable of knocking down a barn. The overhand right was the hardest.

Greatest Knockout: In January 1899 in New York, Sharkey starched Kid McCoy in the 10th round, leading to Sharkey's famed rematch with heavyweight champion James J. Jeffries 10 months later.

Statistical Analysis: In an era when long knockout streaks were almost unheard of, Sharkey stopped 19 straight opponents in an average of 3.5 rounds between March 1893 and November '95.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Jim Jeffries called Sharkey the toughest man he ever fought, and he would know: They went a total of 45 rounds with Jeffries winning both decisions by a close margin.

Beyond The Punch: In an era of brutes, Sharkey was the most brutish and possibly the dirtiest. He used his head, shoulders, elbows—anything short of an iron maiden in there—and he wasn't ashamed of it.

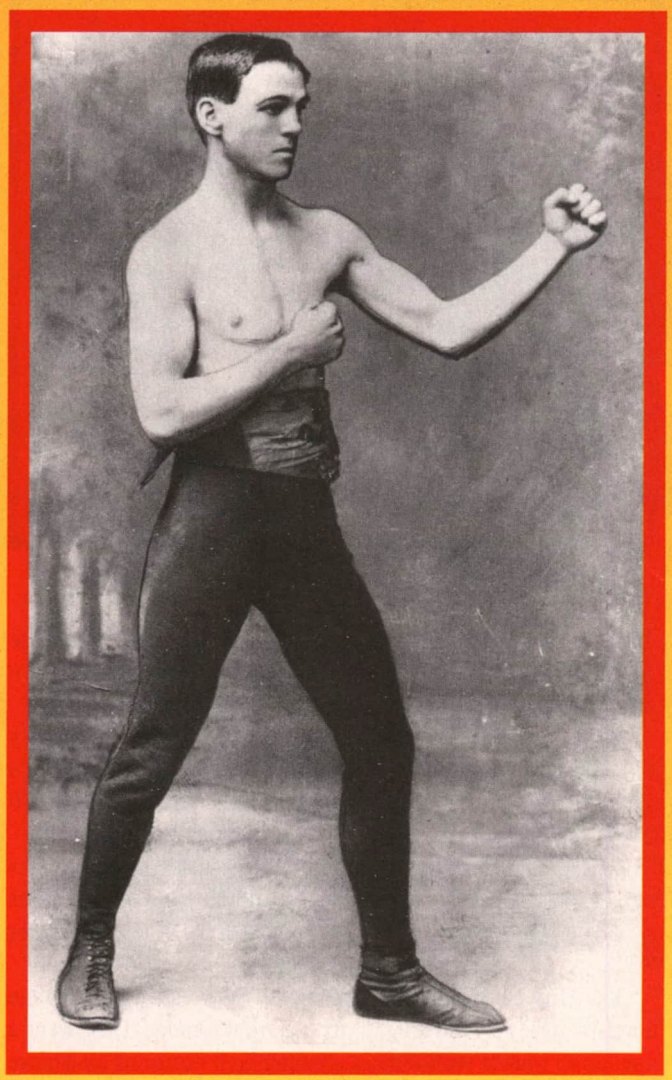
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Against Bob Fitzsimmons, the best puncher of the era, Sharkey was close to helpless: Fitz flattened him in December 1896, but somehow was disqualified; in August 1900, he stopped Sharkey in the second.

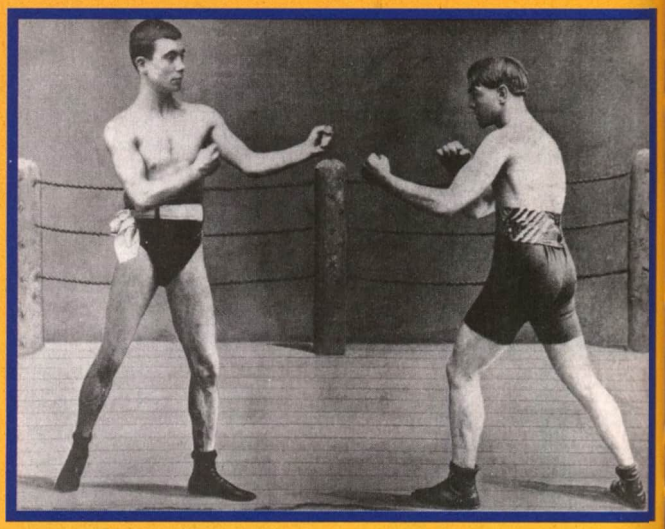
65 TERRY McGOVERN

Record: 60-4-4 (42)
with 10 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1897-1908

Titles Held: World Bantamweight 1899; World Featherweight 1900-'01





McGovern (right) and the man he'd beat for the bantam belt, Pedlar Palmer

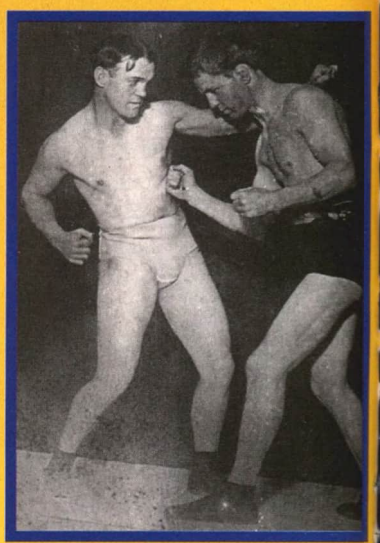
Best Punch: McGovern's straight right knocked the bejesus out of most of the world's best bantamweights and featherweights at the turn of the century.

Greatest Knockout: McGovern nearly killed poor Pedlar Palmer to claim the world bantamweight title by first-round kayo in New York in September 1899.

Statistical Analysis: From May 1899 to March '00, McGovern scored 18 straight knockouts in an average of 2.8 rounds. That's a remarkable statistic for a turn-of-the century fighter.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Eddie Goodbody twice went the distance with "Terrible Terry." McGovern took a 10-round decision in August 1897 in Brooklyn, and they drew two months later, also in Brooklyn.

Beyond The Punch: McGovern was the most intimidating fighter of his era and had a violent temper that would prove his undoing against Young Corbett II. He also was a savage bodypuncher.



McGovern fires a left and takes a bodyshot from Battling Nelson

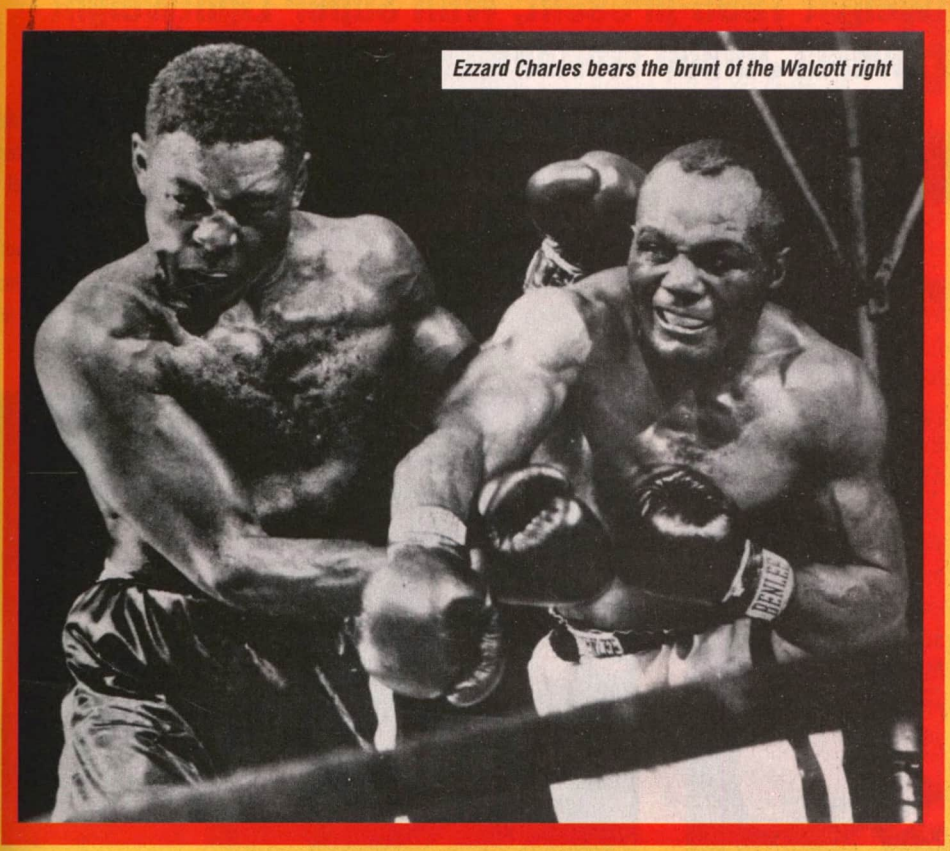
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Corbett outsmarted and stopped McGovern in two rounds to win the featherweight title in November 1901 in Connecticut. Proving it was no fluke, he turned the trick again in 11 rounds in March '03 in California.

66 JERSEY JOE WALCOTT

Record: 53-18-1 (33)

Years Fought: 1930-'53

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1951-'52



Ezzard Charles bears the brunt of the Walcott right

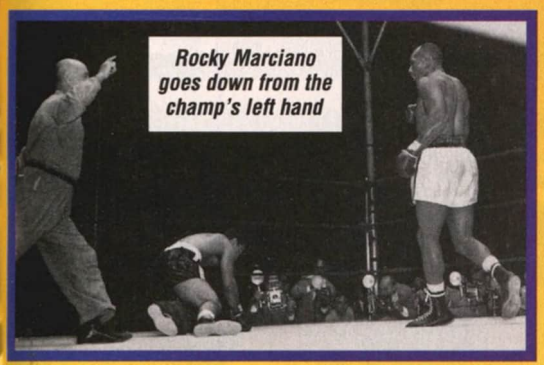
the normally sturdy Ezzard Charles.

Statistical Analysis: Even the great ones get cold: Walcott went almost three years and eight straight fights—from August '46 to June '49—without scoring a knockout.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Like the other great heavyweights and light heavyweights of the era, Walcott could whip Joey Maxim—he did it in two of three meetings—but he couldn't stop him.

Beyond The Punch: Walcott was a remarkable, if eccentric technician who on his best day could counter-punch a guy right into the first row. He didn't copy moves; he invented them.

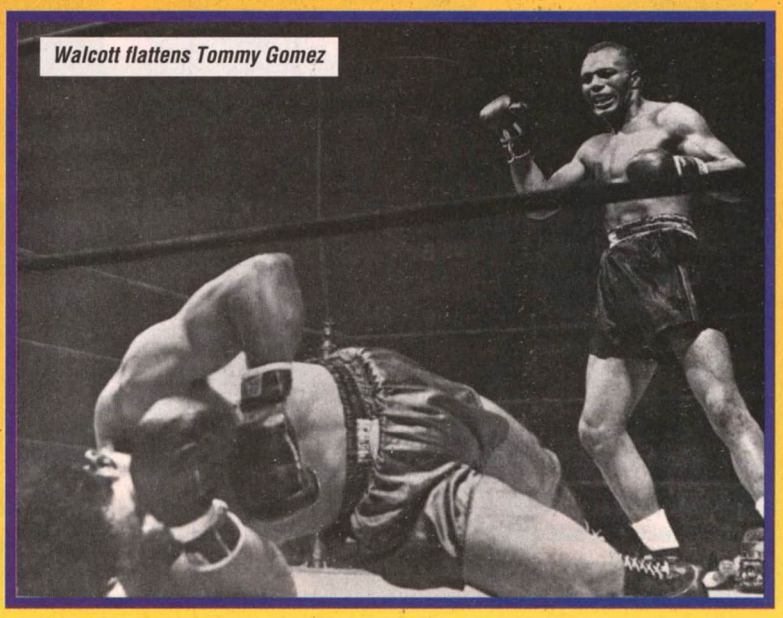
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In one of the great heavyweight title fights, Walcott looked on his way to grinding out a decision win when Marciano's thunder bolt of a right ended things in the 13th round in September 1952.



Rocky Marciano goes down from the champ's left hand

Best Punch: It was the hook that dropped Rocky Marciano, but the right hand—the one that dropped Joe Louis three times—was Walcott's best punch.

Greatest Knockout: Walcott was taking his fourth shot at the title when he stepped in with a perfect left uppercut in the seventh that put to sleep



Walcott flattens Tommy Gomez

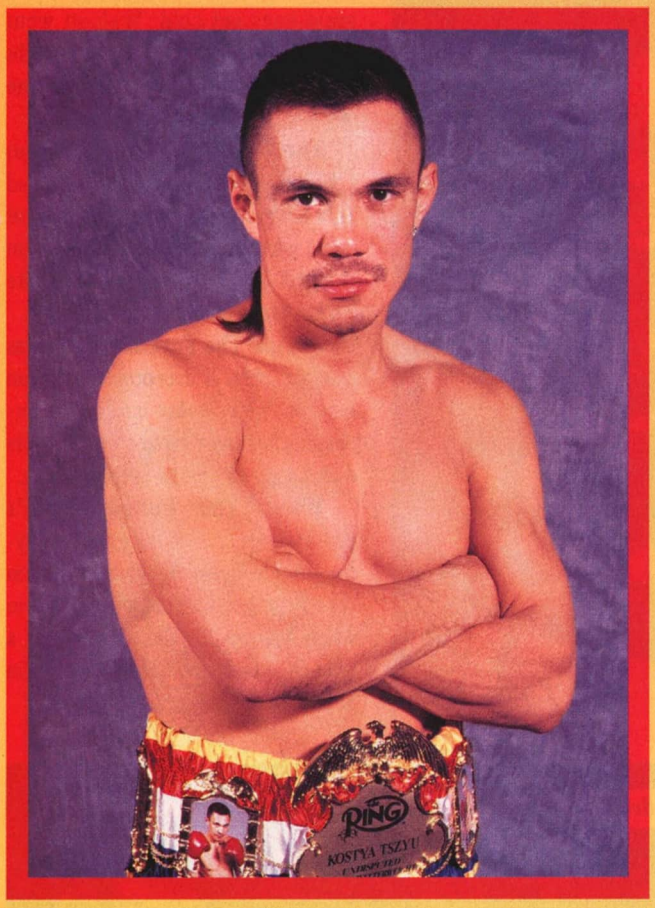
67 KOSTYA TSZYU

Record: 30-1 (24)

with 1 no-contest

Years Fought: 1992-Present

Titles Held: IBF Junior Welterweight 1995-'97, 2001-present; WBC Super Lightweight 1999-present; WBA Super Lightweight 2001-present; World Junior Welterweight 2001-present



Best Punch: Tszyu's straight right hand is a sledgehammer that breaks guys down over time if it doesn't stiffen them outright.

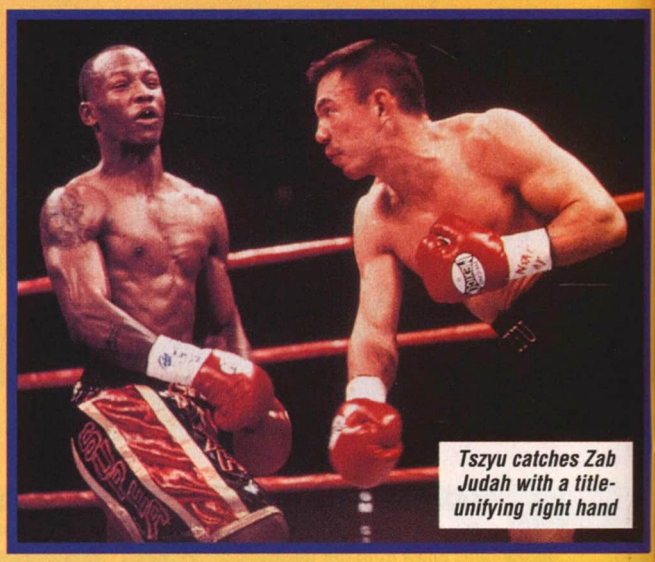
Greatest Knockout: Many thought Zab Judah's speed and mobility would frustrate Tszyu in their unification match in November 2001. Instead, a straight right hand put Judah down and out, more or less, in the second round.

Statistical Analysis: Since being dethroned by Vince Phillips, Tszyu has stopped 10 of 12 opponents (including eight in a row), in an average of five rounds.

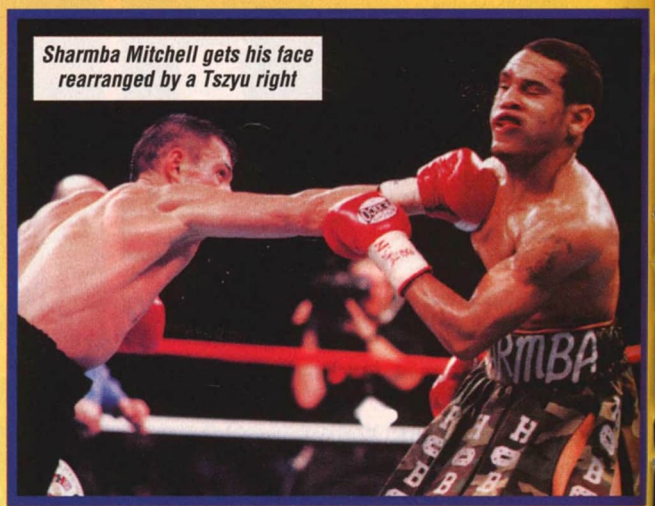
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Tszyu landed just about everything he threw but could not put away steel-chinned former lightweight titlist Livingstone Bramble, who took him the distance in their match in Newcastle, Australia, in August 1993.

Beyond The Punch: Tszyu was a superb boxer during his days as an international amateur standout and when it's smarter to box—as it was against tough Ben Tackie—he can, with excellent results.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Tszyu was all about landing the right hand when Phillips outlasted and outfought him to take the IBF junior welterweight title by 10th-round kayo in May '97.



Tszyu catches Zab Judah with a title-unifying right hand



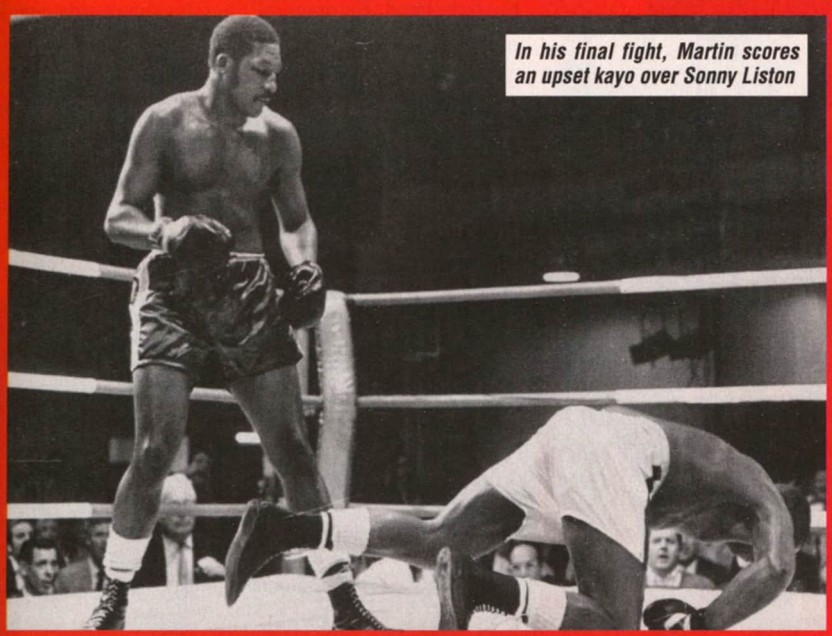
Sharmba Mitchell gets his face rearranged by a Tszyu right

68 LEOTIS MARTIN

Record: 31-5 (19)

Years Fought: 1962-'69

Titles Held: none



In his final fight, Martin scores an upset kayo over Sonny Liston

Best Punch: Martin was largely a counterpuncher, but that doesn't mean he couldn't hit. He had a cannon of a right hand, which he used to kayo Sonny Liston, and you didn't want to get caught with the hook, either.

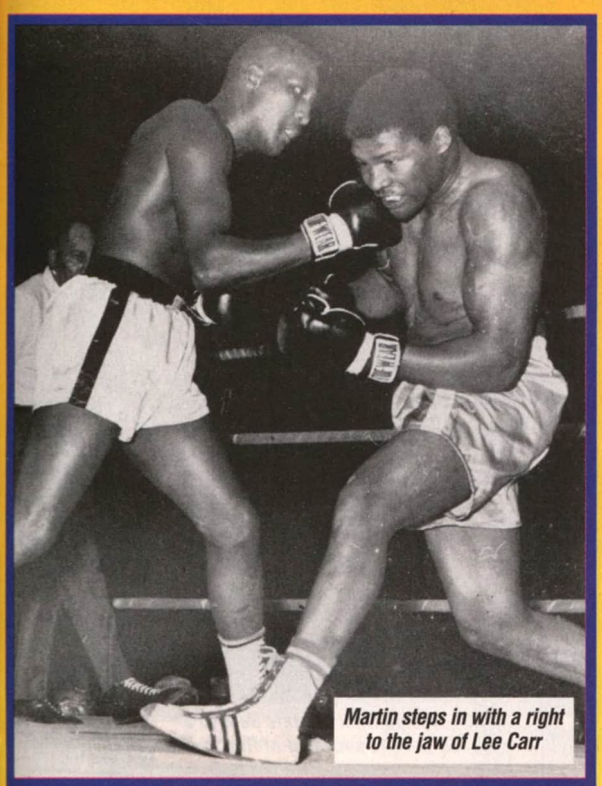
Greatest Knockout: In May 1965, Martin climbed off the canvas to kayo left-hooking Sonny Banks in one of the great Philadelphia slugfests of the era. Tragically, Banks died from head injuries suffered in the bout.

Statistical Analysis: Martin was not a fast starter. On average, his knockout victories occurred in the fifth round.

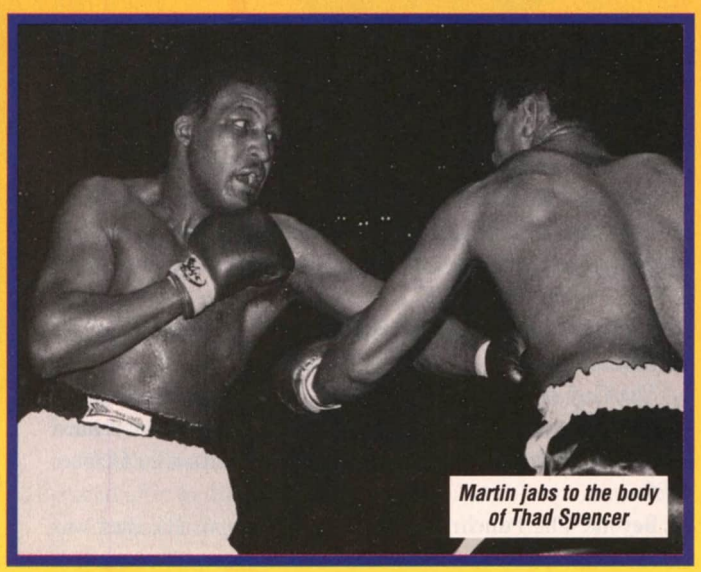
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Martin had to settle for a decision over journeyman Roberto Davila, but so did George Foreman, Cleveland Williams, Ernie Terrell, Amos Lincoln, and Oscar Bonavena, among others.

Beyond The Punch: Martin was a full level below the best heavyweights of his era because he didn't have the greatest chin or the best technique. He went in there trying to land the bomb. When he couldn't, he was in trouble.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Martin was in over his head against Jimmy Ellis when they met in August 1967 in the first round of the WBA heavyweight title tournament and was stopped in the ninth round.



Martin steps in with a right to the jaw of Lee Carr



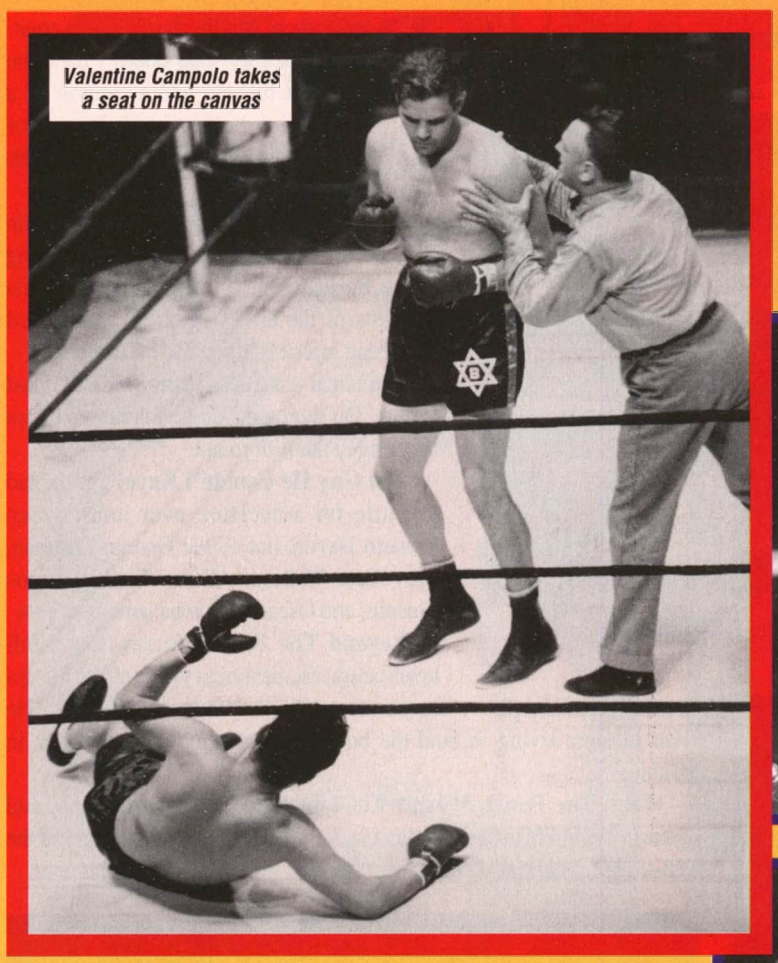
Martin jabs to the body of Thad Spencer

69 BUDDY BAER

Record: 50-7 (45)

Years Fought: 1934-'42

Titles Held: none



Valentine Campolo takes a seat on the canvas

Best Punch: It wasn't quite the bomb his brother had, but this Baer's right hand wreaked chaos among second-tier heavyweights of the 1930s and early-'40s.

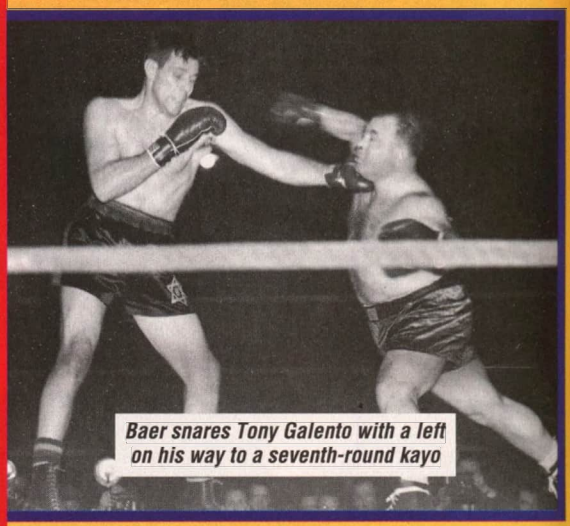
Greatest Knockout: In a stirring slugfest between giant heavyweight contenders, Baer came back from an early beating to outslug and stop hulking, 250-pound Abe Simon in the third round in New York in August 1937.

Statistical Analysis: Buddy's kayo rate is 79 percent; Max's is 63 percent.

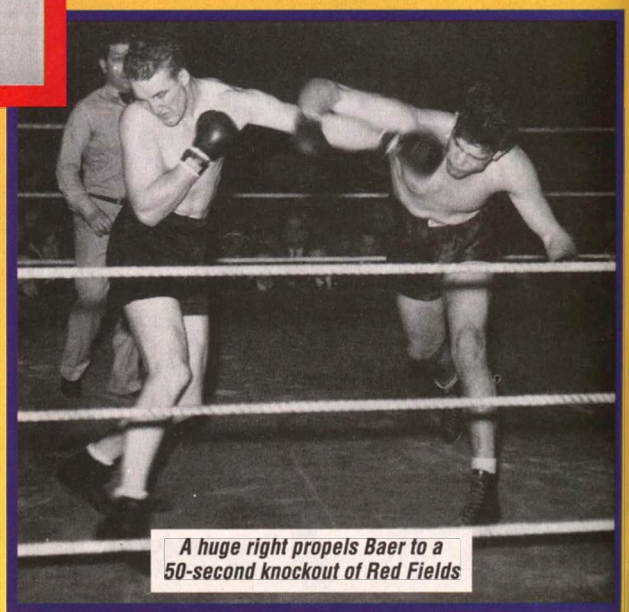
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Lee Savold, who fought all of the best heavyweights of the era and beat a few of them, extended Baer the eight-round distance in their match in Iowa in October 1939.

Beyond The Punch: At 6'6" and 240-plus pounds, Baer was enormous for the 1930s and used his size to generate leverage for his right hand. He often fell in to his opponents though, negating his height advantage.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Baer managed to deck Joe Louis in their first match in May 1941 before being floored himself and then disqualified. But Louis was death in rematches. Despite being outweighed by 44 pounds, he destroyed Baer in the followup four months later, stopping him in the first round and ending his career.



Baer snares Tony Galento with a left on his way to a seventh-round kayo



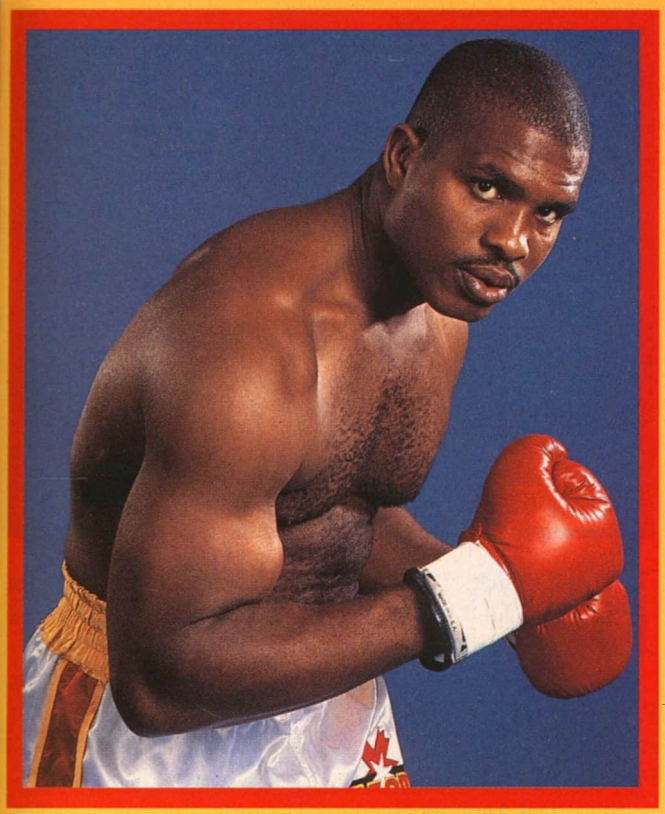
A huge right propels Baer to a 50-second knockout of Red Fields

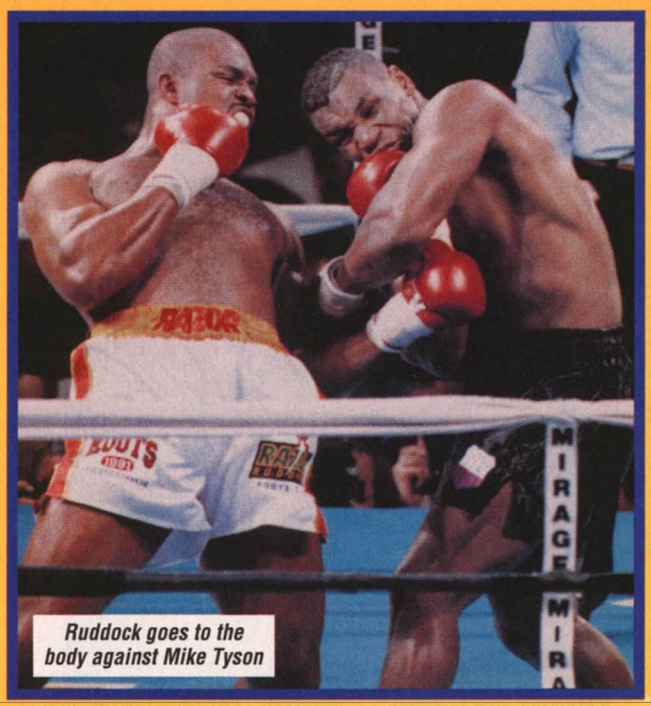
70 RAZOR RUDDOCK

Record: 37-5-1 (28)

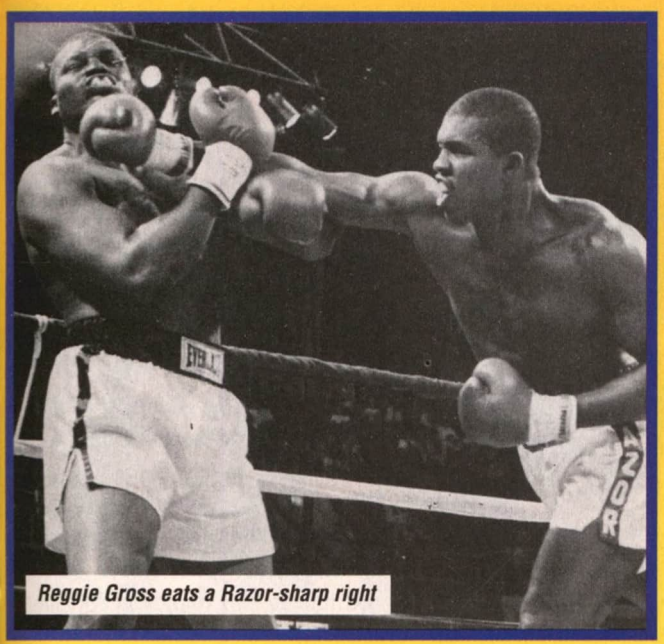
Years Fought: 1982-2001

Titles Held: none





Ruddock goes to the body against Mike Tyson



Reggie Gross eats a Razor-sharp right

Best Punch: When he was at his best, Ruddock's left uppercut/hook—"The Smash" his guys called it—was primarily responsible for one of the most gruesome knockouts of the era, and it set up a lot of others.

Greatest Knockout: Not since Gerry Cooney massacred Ken Norton had there been a heavyweight kayo as spellbindingly brutal as Ruddock's near beheading of Michael Dokes in New York in April 1990.

Statistical Analysis: Ruddock rode a 10-fight kayo streak into the first Mike Tyson fight and had stopped 14 of his previous 16 opponents.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Ruddock got two chances against a prime Tyson and though he had his moments, he lost them both; the first by kayo, the second by decision, both in 1991 in Las Vegas.

Beyond The Punch: Once he discovered he could punch, Ruddock became rather a one-dimensional, undisciplined fighter who wilted if he couldn't take you out early. Also, he wasn't terribly hard to discourage.

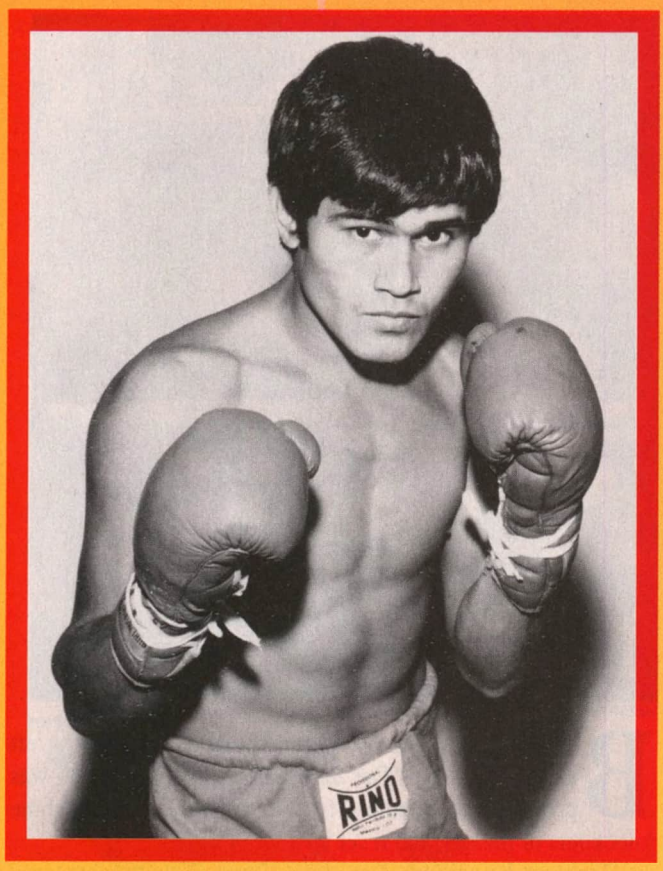
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Ruddock all but disappeared after getting pancaked in two rounds by future champion Lennox Lewis in London in October 1992. Lewis was a slightly better puncher and a much better all-around fighter.

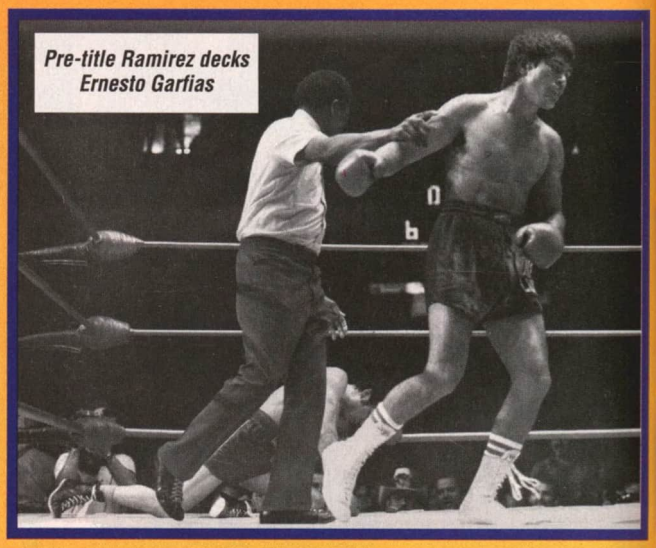
71 JOSE LUIS RAMIREZ

Record: 102-9 (82)

Years Fought: 1973-'90

Titles Held: WBC Lightweight 1984-'85, '87-'88



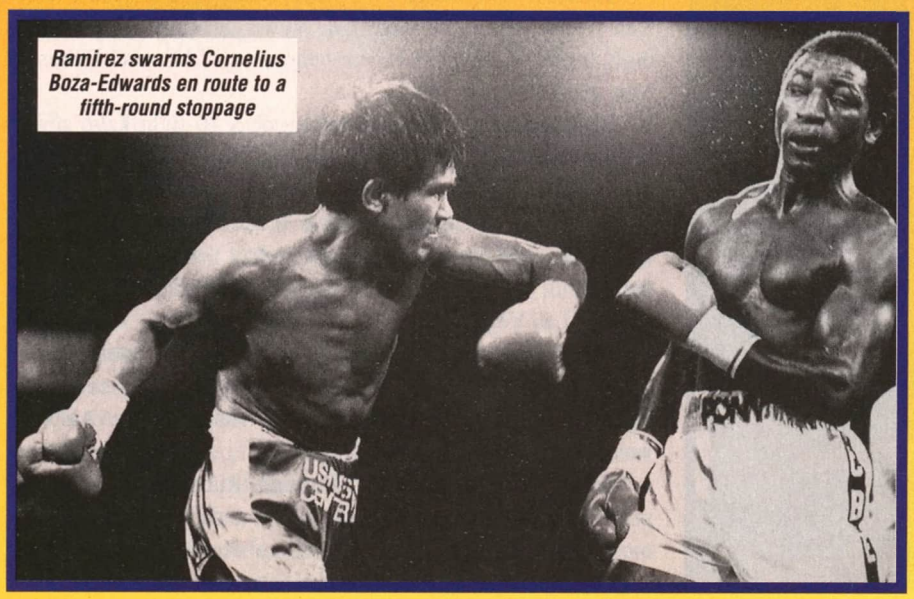


Pre-title Ramirez decks Ernesto Garfias

Best Punch: The southpaw Ramirez' looping left hand didn't look like much when it started out, but when it landed, it did so with a thud.

Greatest Knockout: In November '84 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Ramirez rose from first- and second-round knockdowns to stop nemesis Edwin Rosario in the fourth round in THE RING's Fight of the Year.

Statistical Analysis: Ramirez' 74 percent kayo rate is particularly noteworthy because it's stretched out over 111 fights. Also, eight of Ramirez' nine career losses—89 percent—were to major titleholders.



Ramirez swarms Cornelius Boza-Edwards en route to a fifth-round stoppage

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Despite being awarded the bogus decision in their first fight, Ramirez barely touched Pernell Whitaker over the course of 24 rounds when they met in 1988 and '89.

Beyond The Punch: Ramirez was long and pointy and awkward and tough as all hell. He could be dirty, too, and unless you were very good and at the top of your game, you weren't going to get past him.

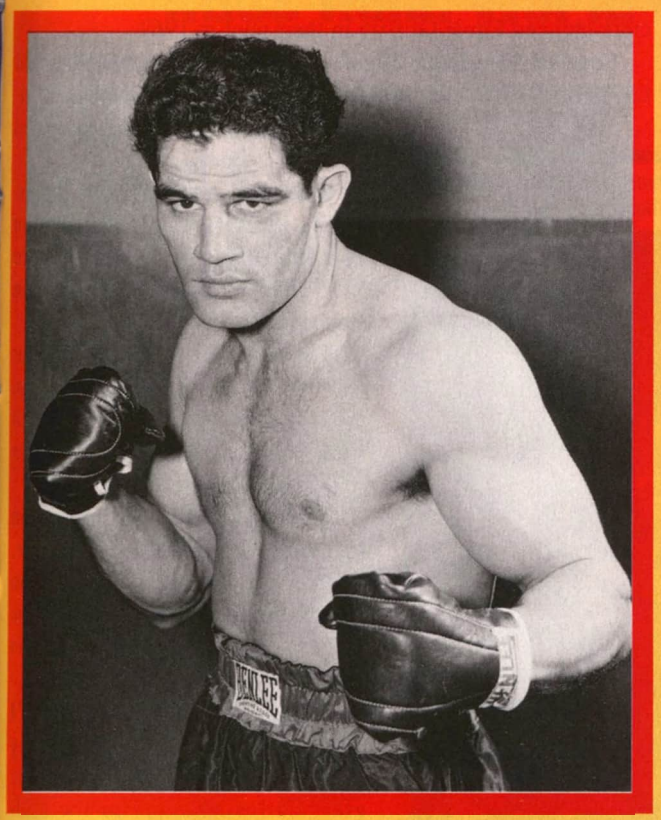
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Ramirez was stopped just once in his career: Legendary hitter Ruben Olivares kayoed him in two rounds in Mexico in April 1978.

72 TOMMY GOMEZ

Record: 75-9-2 (65)

Years Fought: 1939-'50

Titles Held: none



Best Punch: Gomez was a two-fisted puncher, but it was the right that had a lot of fight writers calling him the best heavyweight prospect in the world in the mid-1940s.

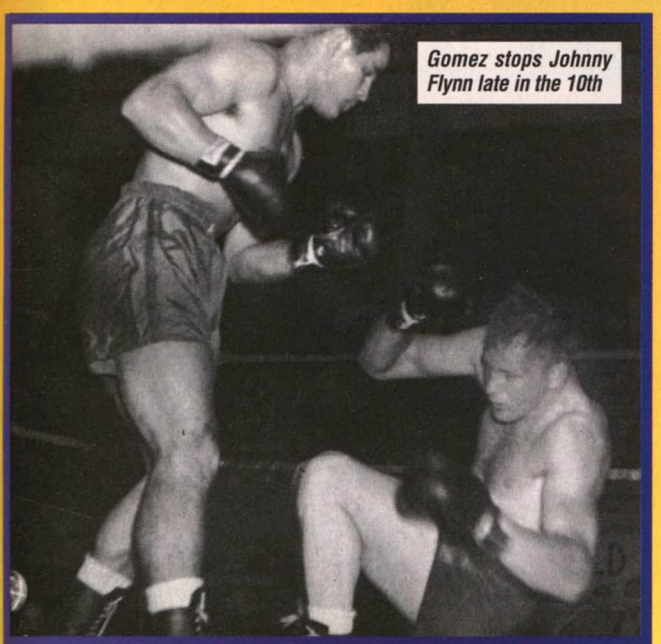
Greatest Knockout: In his breakout fight, Gomez blew out tough journeyman Tony Musto in less than a round in Florida in April 1943.

Statistical Analysis: If Gomez was going to get you, he'd get you early: His 65 knockouts occurred in an average of 3.3 rounds.

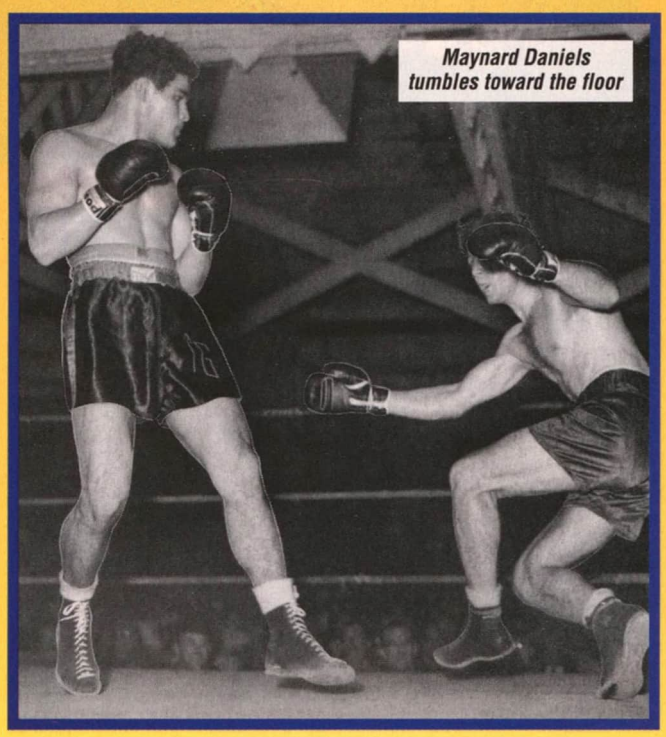
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Gomez twice fought journeyman Natie Brown (who twice lost to Joe Louis) and could not stop him. They drew in December 1948, and Gomez decisioned him over 10 rounds in February '49.

Beyond The Punch: Gomez seemed to have all the tools but could never get over the hump to the next level. Whenever he'd step up against higher-caliber competition, he'd lose.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Gomez was tough and willing but in way over his head against future heavyweight king Jersey Joe Walcott when they met in New York in August 1946. Walcott stopped him in the third round.



Gomez stops Johnny Flynn late in the 10th



Maynard Daniels tumbles toward the floor

73 JOSE NAPOLES

Record: 77-7 (54)

Years Fought: 1958-'75

Titles Held: World Welterweight 1969-'70, '71-'75

Best Punch: Napoles' left hook was the best punch in the welterweight division in the early-to-mid-1970s. The right uppercut was vicious too—it floored the concrete-chinned Emile Griffith in their bout in 1969.

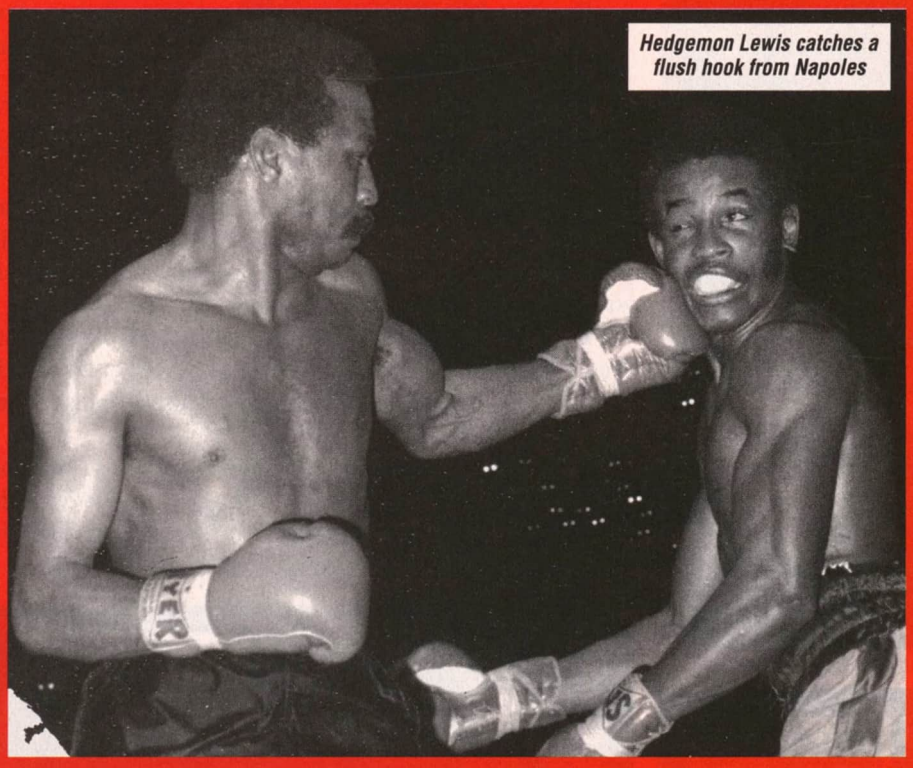
Greatest Knockout: Napoles claimed the welterweight world title in April '69 in California by taking apart and stopping the talented Curtis Cokes in 13 one-sided rounds.

Statistical Analysis: Looking little like a great puncher, Napoles won nine straight decisions from 1959 to '61. Then, from '63 to '68, he stopped 23 of 25.

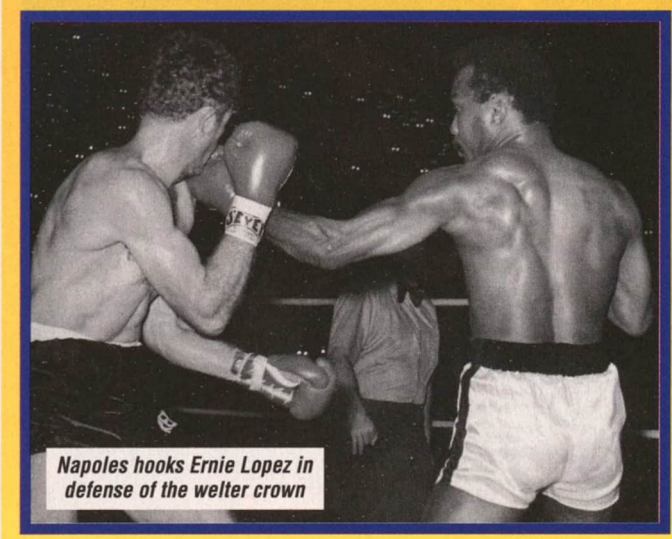
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Fellow Hall of Famer Griffith, past his best days, took Napoles the full route in a losing effort in October '69 in California.

Beyond The Punch: In addition to being a crippling puncher, Napoles was an exquisite boxer who was troubled, particularly later in his career, by scar tissue around his eyes.

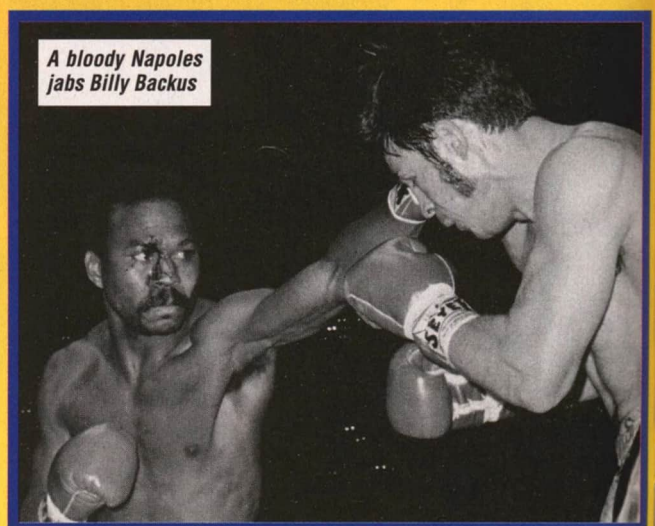
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Napoles was completely outgunned when he challenged the great Carlos Monzon for the middleweight title in Monte Carlo in February 1974. Monzon stopped him in seven rounds.



Hedgemon Lewis catches a flush hook from Napoles



Napoles hooks Ernie Lopez in defense of the welter crown



A bloody Napoles jabs Billy Backus

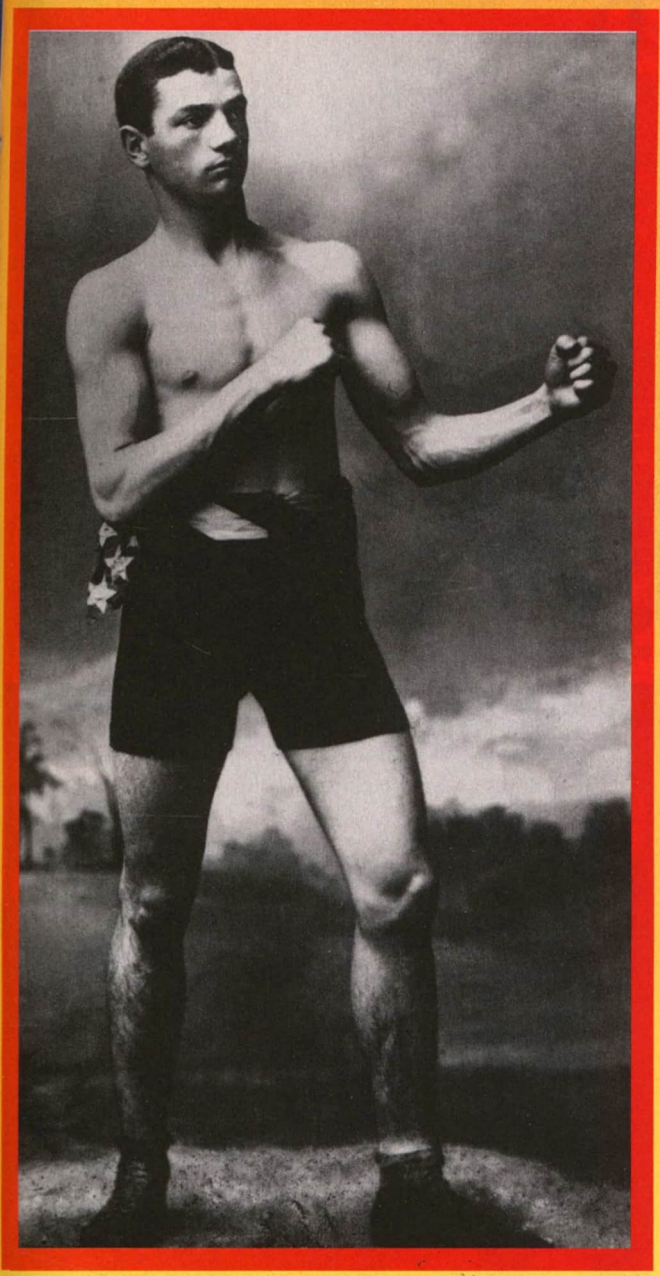
74 CHARLES "KID" McCOY

Record: 81-6-7 (56)

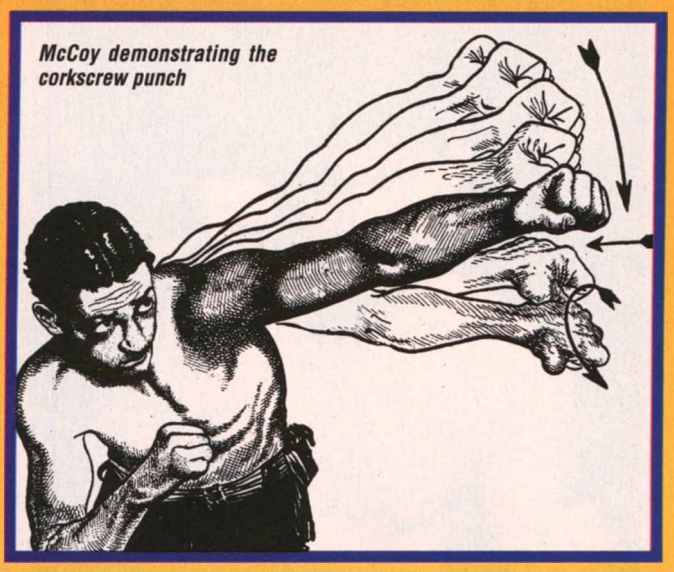
with 9 no-decisions & 2 no-contests

Years Fought: 1891-1916

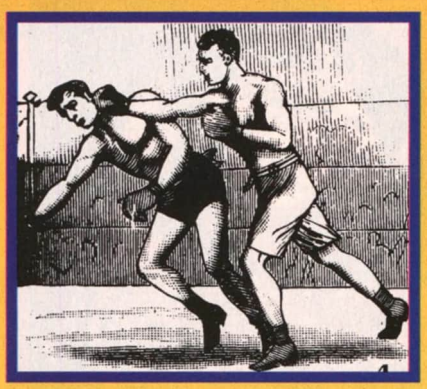
Titles Held: World Middleweight 1897



Best Punch: McCoy's straight right, often delivered with his famous "corkscrew" twist, did in a lot of the better welterweights, middleweights, and light heavyweights of the late-19th century.



McCoy demonstrating the corkscrew punch



An illustration of McCoy's knockout win over Jim Stewart

Greatest Knockout: In March 1896, McCoy met the legendary Tommy Ryan and stopped him in the 15th round. With the victory, McCoy laid a disputed claim to the middleweight title.

Statistical Analysis: McCoy's longest kayo streak lasted 12 fights and ran from November 1897 to April '98.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In what is generally recognized as the first fight for the world light heavyweight title, Jack Root decisioned McCoy over 10 rounds in Detroit in April 1903.

Beyond The Punch: McCoy looked like an undernourished accountant rather than a 19th-century prize fighter, but he could punch and, for the era, was a fairly evolved boxer-puncher and tactician.

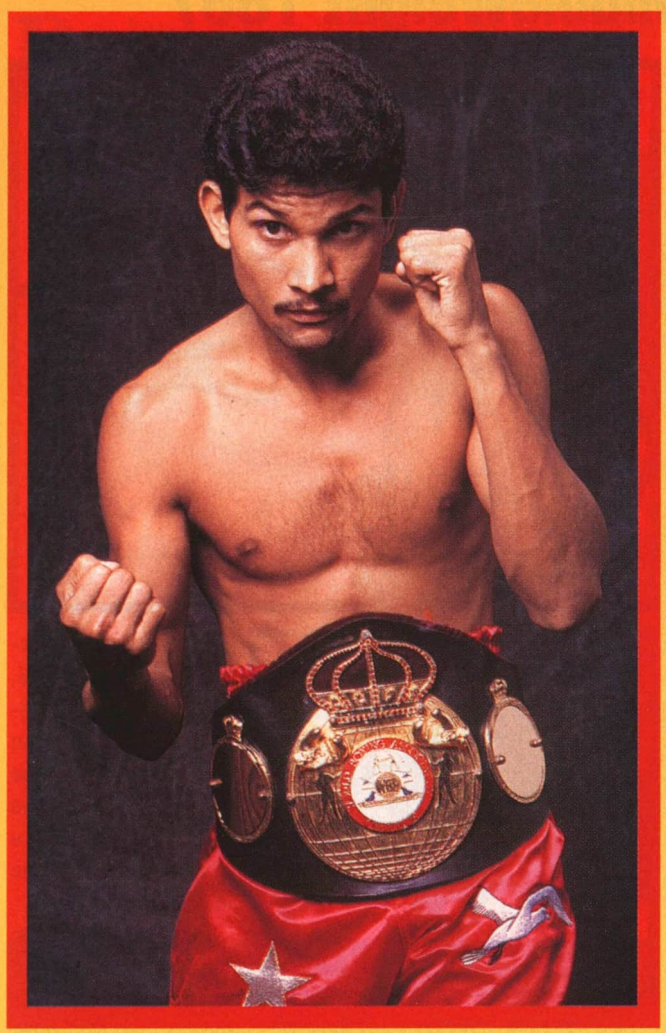
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: McCoy was out of his league when he took on the bigger, more vicious Tom Sharkey in January 1899 in New York. Sharkey mauled him on the way to scoring a 10th-round knockout.

75 ANTONIO ESPARRAGOZA

Record: 30-2-4 (27)

Years Fought: 1981-'91

Titles Held: WBA Featherweight 1987-'91



Best Punch: Esparragoza's right hand was a bomb, especially as a counterpunch. It usually was straight as an arrow, and when it landed, things got fun.

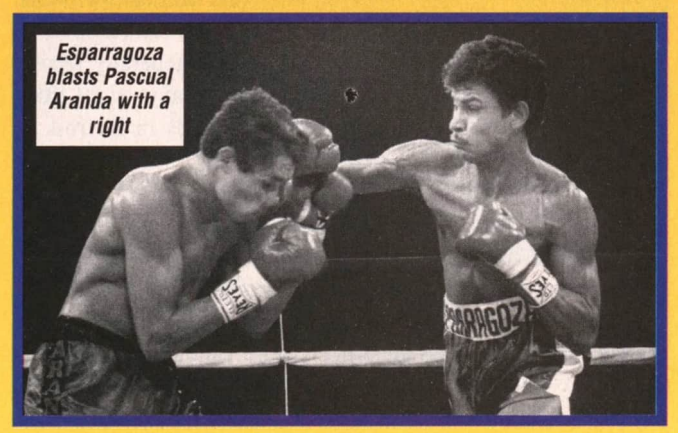
Greatest Knockout: In March 1987, Esparragoza challenged featherweight titlist Stevie Cruz in Cruz' home state of Texas. Cruz was just two fights removed from his title win over Barry McGuigan, but Esparragoza outclassed him and stopped him in the 12th round.

Statistical Analysis: Esparragoza's 75 percent kayo rate is among the highest of all featherweight champions. His 27 knockouts occurred, on the average, in just less than five rounds.

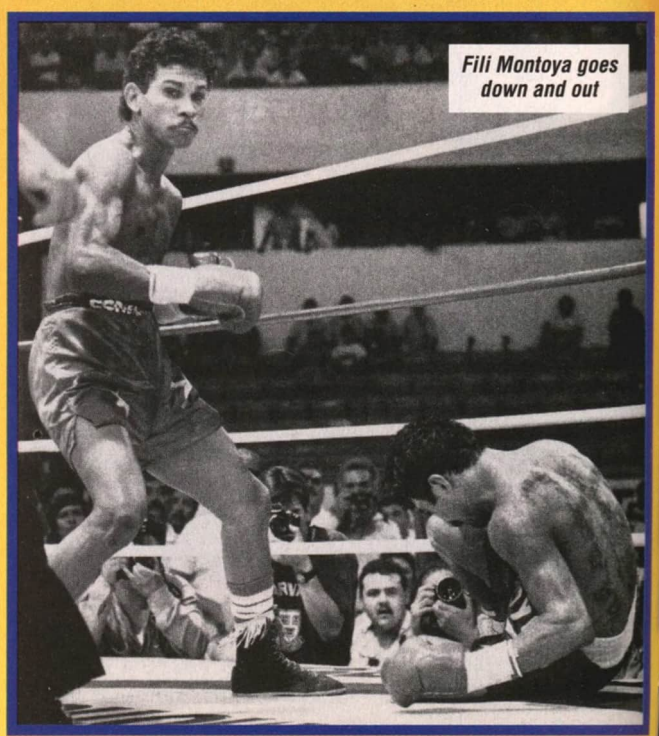
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Tough Marcos Villasana fought Esparragoza to a standstill in their June '88 title fight in California. The draw verdict would have been a decision for Villasana had he not had a point deducted for low blows.

Beyond The Punch: Esparragoza's height and facial appearance frequently led to comparisons to Alexis Arguello, and though stylistically they shared some things, Esparragoza lacked Arguello's alarmingly consistent one-punch knockout power and punching genius.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In March 1991 in Korea, Esparragoza was outhustled, decisioned, and dethroned by unheralded Yong-Kyun Park. He retired immediately thereafter.



Esparragoza blasts Pascual Aranda with a right



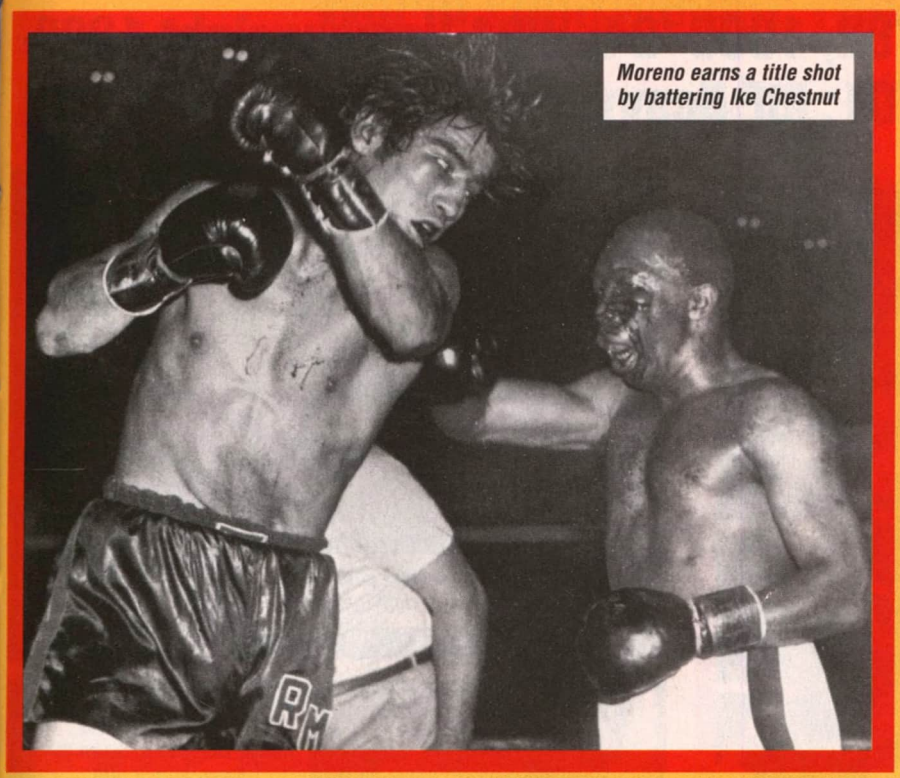
Fili Montoya goes down and out

76 RICARDO MORENO

Record: 60-12-1 (59)

Years Fought: 1954-'67

Titles Held: none



Moreno earns a title shot by battering Ike Chestnut

Best Punch: Moreno threw bombs non-stop with both hands. The left hook was probably the hardest.

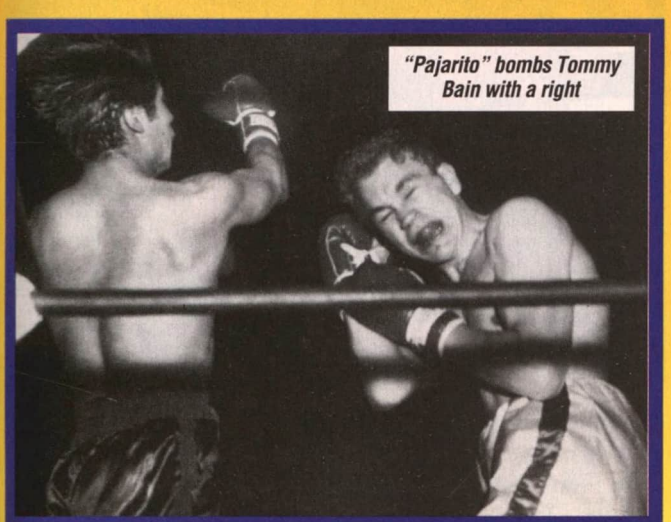
Greatest Knockout: Moreno earned a shot at the featherweight title with a sixth-round demolition of top-ranked Ike Chestnut in November 1957 in California. Chestnut had never before been stopped.

Statistical Analysis: To go along with Moreno's impressive 81 percent kayo rate is a less impressive kayo-loss rate of 75 percent; he was stopped in nine of his 12 losses. A knockout one way or the other was the result in 93 percent of his fights, and he never once won a decision—the lone non-kayo win was by disqualification.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Raul Rojas stopped Moreno in two straight fights in California in March and June 1966.

Beyond The Punch: There was very little that was scientific about Moreno. He was wild and aggressive, and if you got caught at the end of his punch and weren't a top-five type guy, you were going.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Moreno's only title shot came against featherweight champion Hogan "Kid" Bassey in California in April 1958. Moreno had crowd support on his side, but little else. Bassey took him apart and stopped him with a straight right hand in the third round.



"Pajarito" bombs Tommy Bain with a right

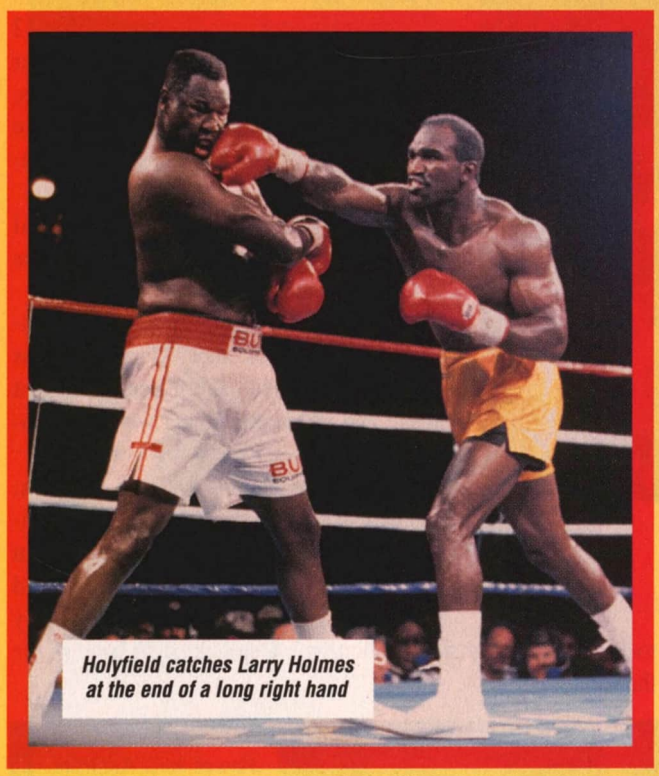
Moreno lands a stiff jab against Gaetano Annaloro

77 EVANDER HOLYFIELD

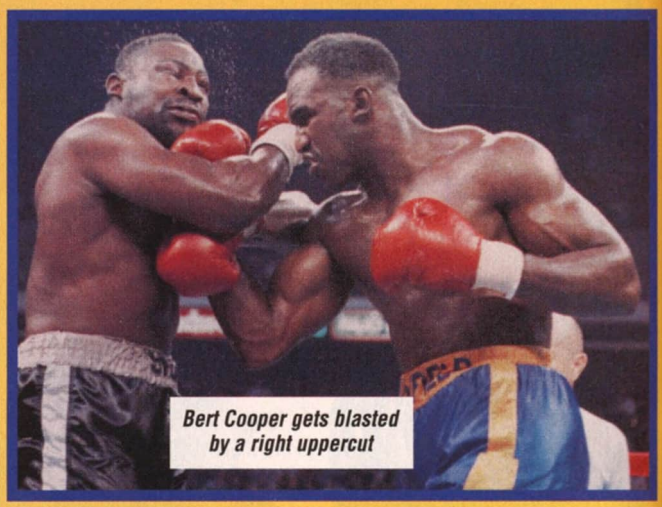
Record: 38-6-2 (25)

Years Fought: 1984-Present

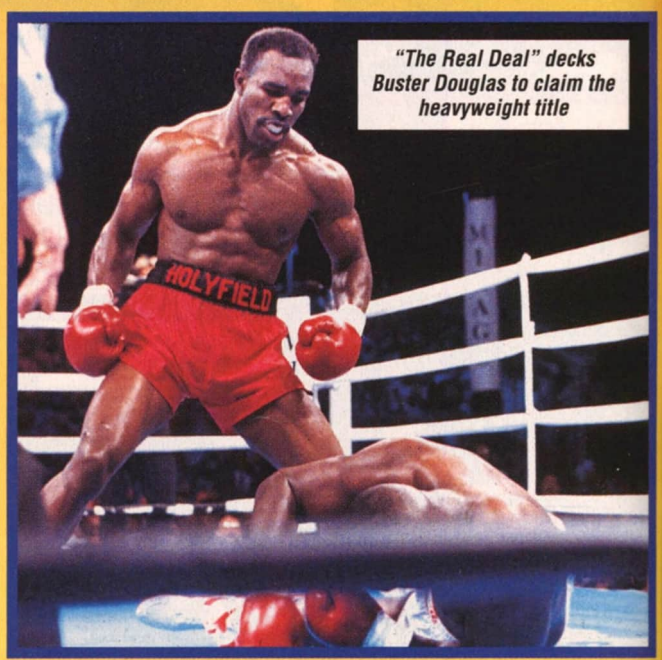
Titles Held: WBA Cruiserweight 1986-'88; IBF Cruiserweight 1987-'88; WBC Cruiserweight 1988; World Heavyweight 1990-'92, 1993-'94; WBA Heavyweight 1996-'99, 2000-'01; IBF Heavyweight 1997-'99



Holyfield catches Larry Holmes at the end of a long right hand



Bert Cooper gets blasted by a right uppercut



"The Real Deal" decks Buster Douglas to claim the heavyweight title

Best Punch: Holyfield's left hook was one of the most perfect punches in the game and very nearly saved him against Riddick Bowe in their brutal third meeting.

Greatest Knockout: In THE RING's 1996 Upset and Fight of the Year, Holyfield, a huge underdog, counterpunched Mike Tyson silly and stopped him in the 11th round.

Statistical Analysis: Holyfield rode a 13-bout knockout streak into his fight against George Foreman in April 1991, which he won by decision. He has not scored a knockout in his last seven fights, lowering his kayo rate from 64 percent to 57 percent.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: While Holyfield became the first ever to floor Ray Mercer, he couldn't stop him in their May 1995 meeting and settled for a decision win.

Beyond The Punch: Holyfield's will, tenacity, iron chin, and physical strength were more responsible for his great success than was his punching power. But on top of all that, he sure could hit.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Holyfield was outmuscled, and, importantly, outfought on the inside during his two losses to Bowe in their classic first and third meetings, held in 1992 and '95 in Las Vegas.

78 IKE WILLIAMS

Record: 125-24-5 (60)

Years Fought: 1940-'55

Titles Held: NBA Lightweight 1945-'47; World Lightweight 1947-'51

Williams levels Jesse Flores in defense of the lightweight title

Best Punch: Williams took out most of his era's best lightweights, and the left hook, especially in close, was the one to watch for.

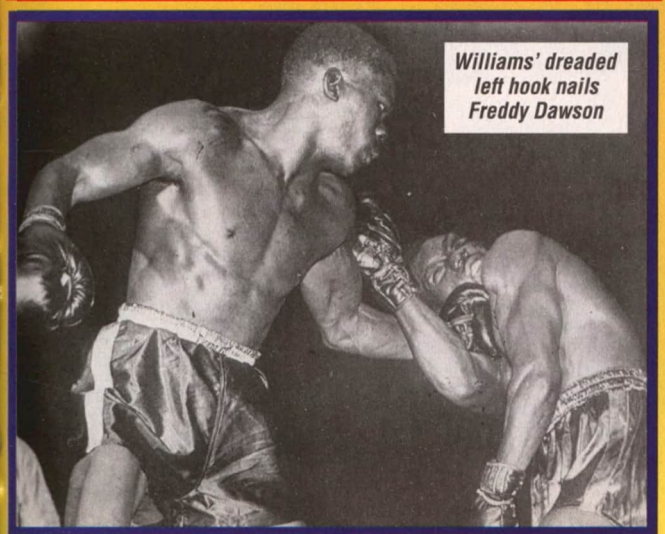
Greatest Knockout: Bob Montgomery had knocked out Williams in 1944 and, Williams suspected, enjoyed it too much. In August '47 in Philadelphia, Williams got revenge, knocking Montgomery stiff in the sixth to unify the lightweight title.

Statistical Analysis: Williams' longest kayo streak was six fights; the most consecutive fights he had without scoring a kayo was 11. He was an extremely hurtful puncher who just didn't have the most dazzling kayo numbers.

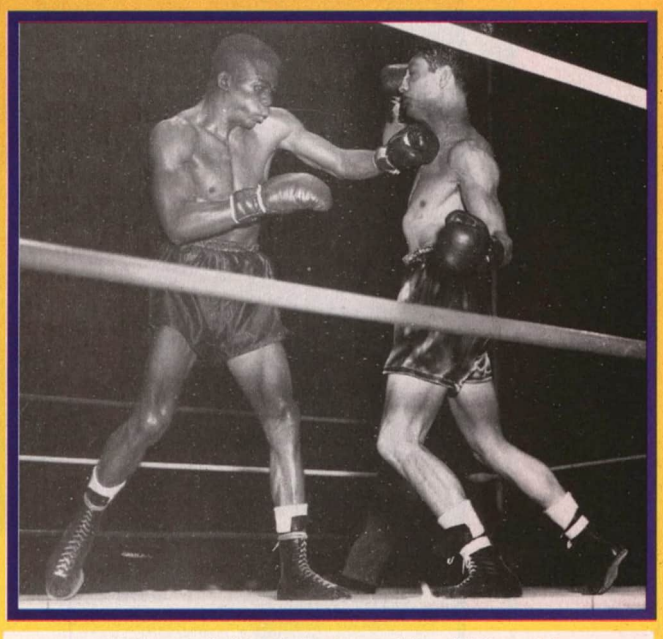
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Legendary welterweight champion Kid Gavilan wasn't stopped in 143 fights, and that includes three with Williams. Williams outpointed Gavilan in the first meeting, in 1948, and dropped the next two, both in'49.

Beyond The Punch: Williams was tenacious and indefatigable in the ring and had solid skills for a guy who liked the knockout as much as he did.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Williams had to drop 20 pounds in three weeks for his title defense against poorly regarded challenger Jimmy Carter in May 1951 in New York. It drained him, and Carter beat him up and stopped him in 14 rounds to win the title.

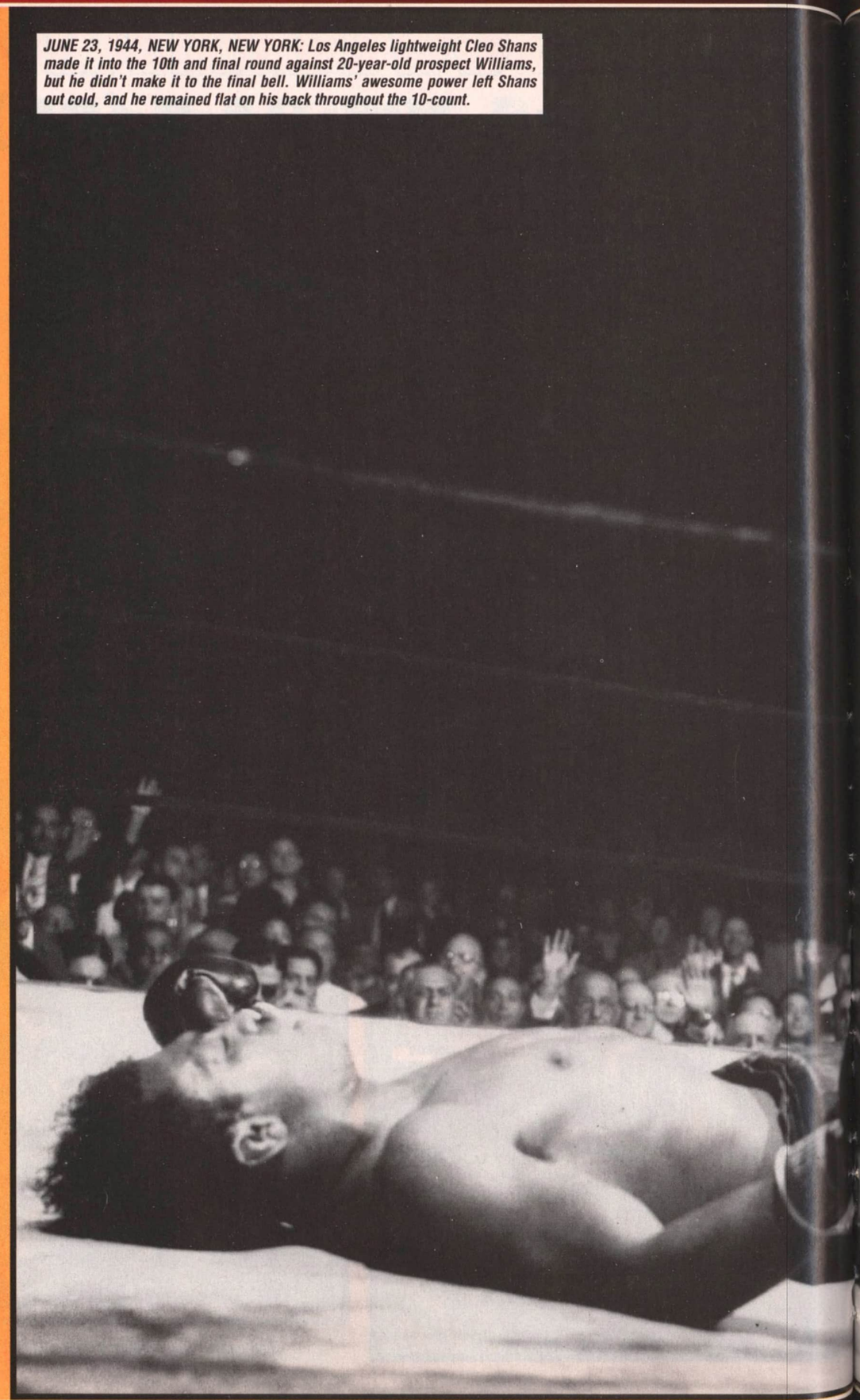


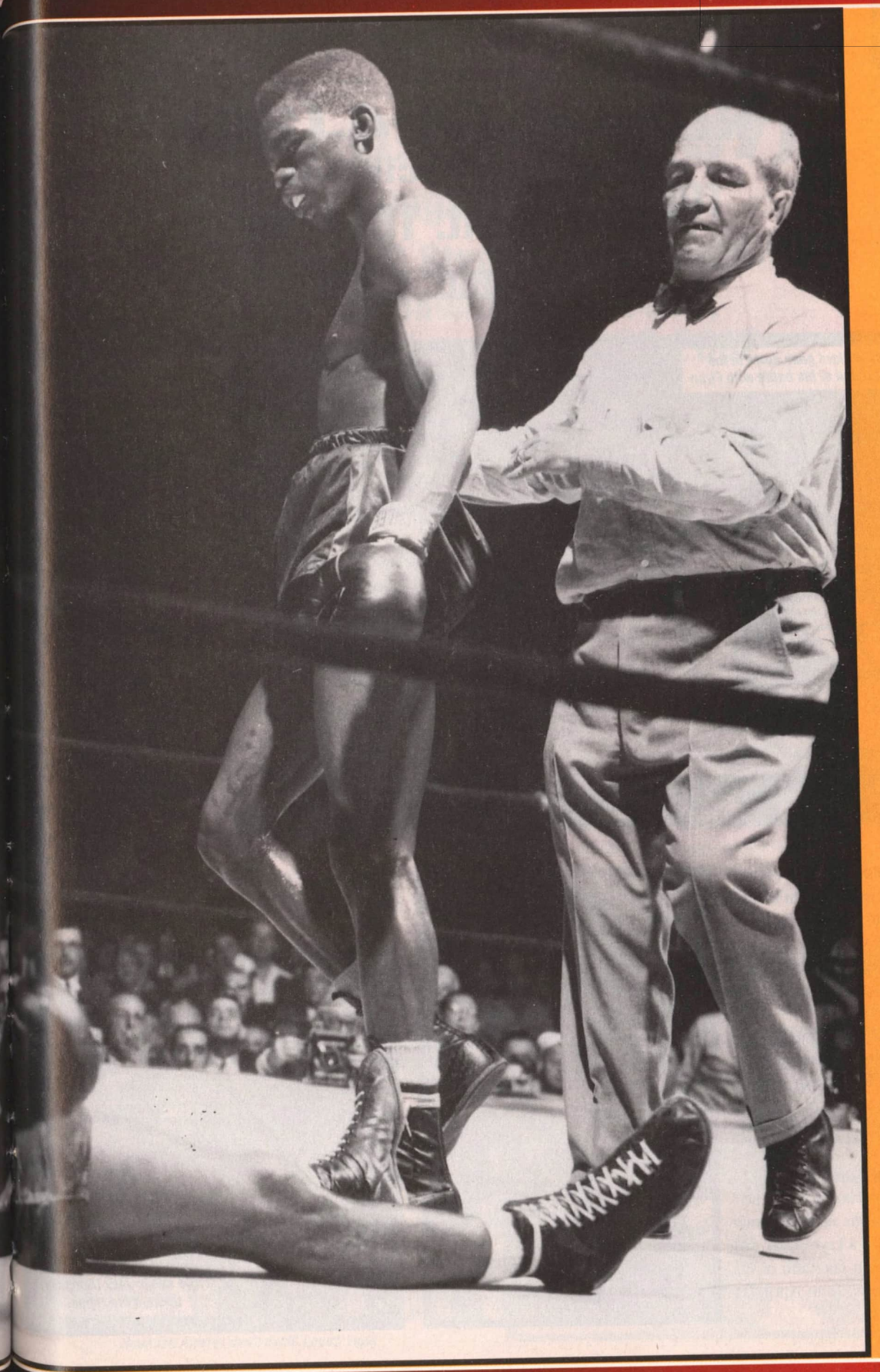
Williams' dreaded left hook nails Freddy Dawson



Challenger Enrique Bolanos runs into a Williams jab

JUNE 23, 1944, NEW YORK, NEW YORK: Los Angeles lightweight Cleo Shans made it into the 10th and final round against 20-year-old prospect Williams, but he didn't make it to the final bell. Williams' awesome power left Shans out cold, and he remained flat on his back throughout the 10-count.



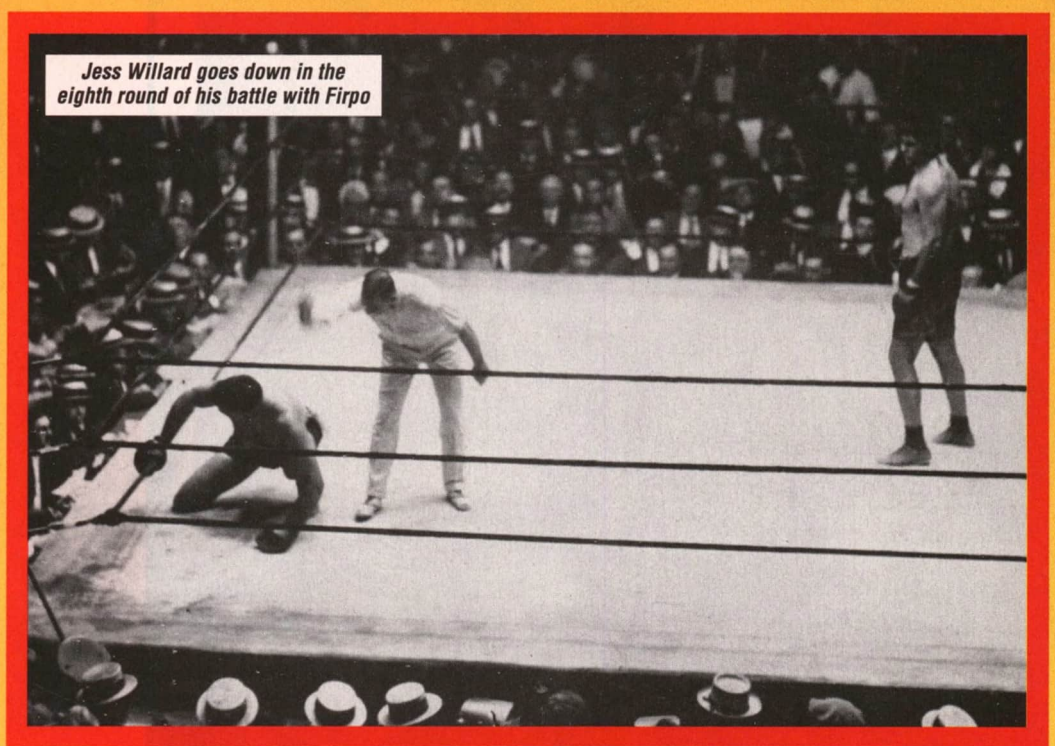


79 LUIS FIRPO

Record: 31-4 (26)
with 3 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1917-'36

Titles Held: none

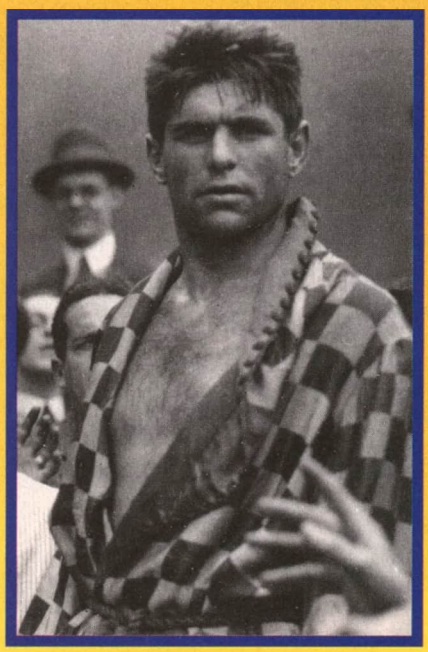


Jess Willard goes down in the eighth round of his battle with Firpo

Best Punch: Firpo's looping overhand right brought him to within an instant of winning the world heavyweight title. It wasn't pretty, but it took out a lot of the era's better heavyweight fighters.

Greatest Knockout: Firpo clubbed former heavyweight king Jess Willard into bloody submission in eight rounds in their July 1923 "Battle Of The Giants" in New Jersey.

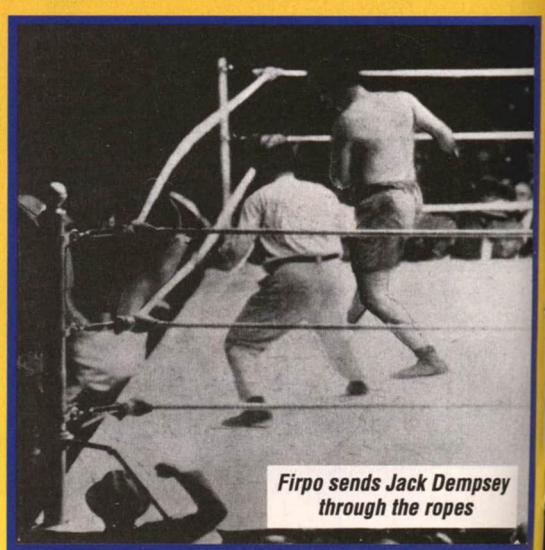
Statistical Analysis: Seven of Firpo's 26 knockouts, or 27 percent, came in the second round. Also, Firpo had a kayo streak that lasted just about one-third of his career, 12 fights, from April '21 to July '23.



The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Billy Miske, Fred Fulton, and the great Harry Greb stopped journeyman Homer Smith, but Smith lasted the full 10 rounds with Firpo in their fight in August '23 in Nebraska.

Beyond The Punch: There may never be a more apt nickname than Firpo's "Wild Bull Of The Pampas"—he couldn't fight a lick, but he could sure punch with the right.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Firpo scored the most dramatic knockdown of his September 1923 slugfest with world champion Jack Dempsey, but not the most important. That occurred in the second round when Dempsey sent him down and out, finally, with a right of his own.



Firpo sends Jack Dempsey through the ropes

80 RICARDO LOPEZ

Record: 50-0-1 (37)

Years Fought: 1985-2001

Titles Held: WBC Strawweight 1990-'98; WBA Minimumweight 1998; IBF Junior Flyweight 1999-2002

Lopez launches a left at Ratanapol Vorapin's jaw

Best Punch: Lopez could hurt and stop guys with any punch. But the left hook, delivered in close or from distance, was a scorcher. No man that small should have been able to hit that hard with one blow.

Greatest Knockout: In July 1993, Lopez overwhelmed Saman Sorjaturong in the second round in Mexico. Sorjaturong would go on to enjoy a long reign as a junior flyweight titlist.

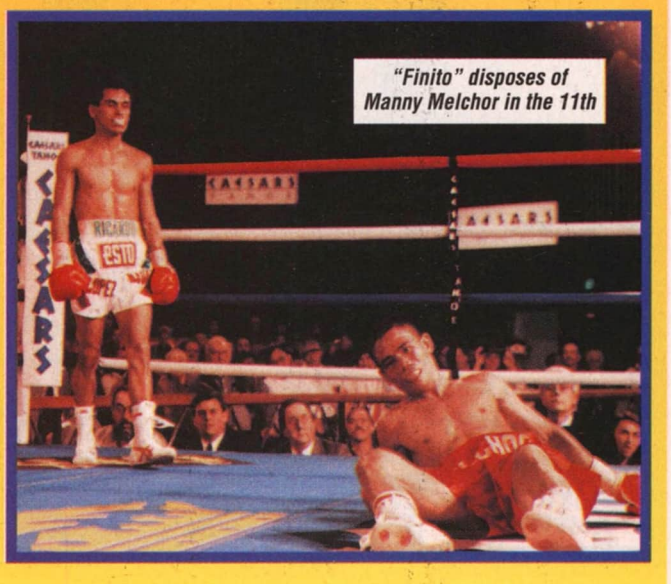
Statistical Analysis: Lopez knocked out 16 of 21 challengers in defense of the strawweight title, a rate of 76 percent. His career knockout rate is 73 percent.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Herminio Ramirez lasted the 10-round distance with "Finito" twice in 1986, the only two fights among Lopez' first 11 that didn't end early.

Beyond The Punch: Lopez was mechanically superb on both offense and defense. He was patient, methodical, and supremely confident in his punch. It showed.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Lopez needed more than his punch to withstand two spirited challenges by the bigger, stronger Rosendo Alvarez. "El Bufalo" battled Lopez to a disputed technical draw in Mexico City in March 1998 and lost a split decision to Lopez eight months later in Las Vegas.

Rosendo Alvarez can't avoid Lopez' right



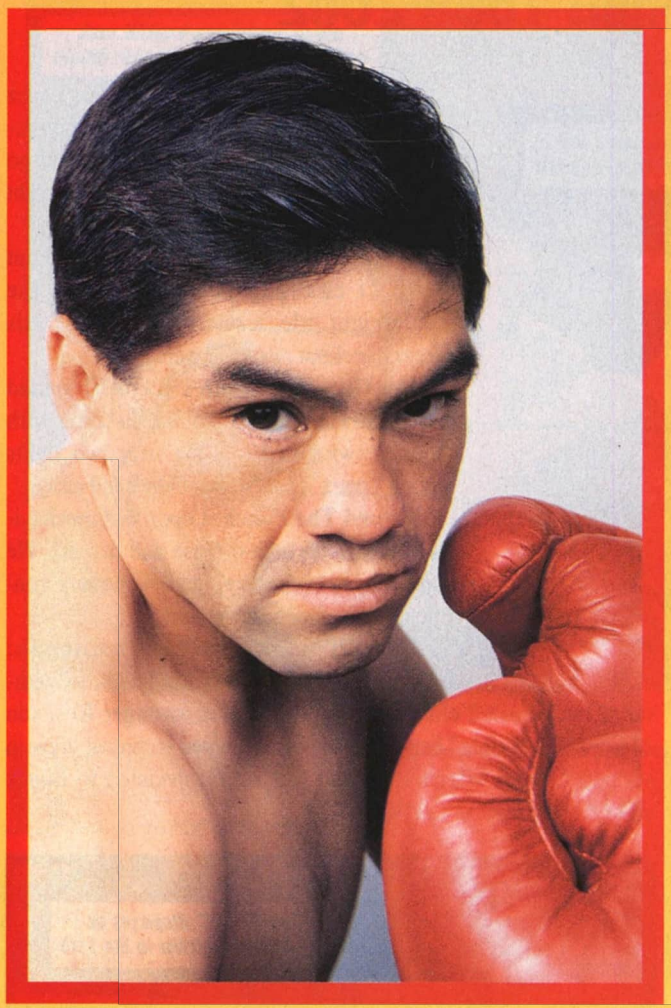
"Finito" disposes of Manny Melchor in the 11th

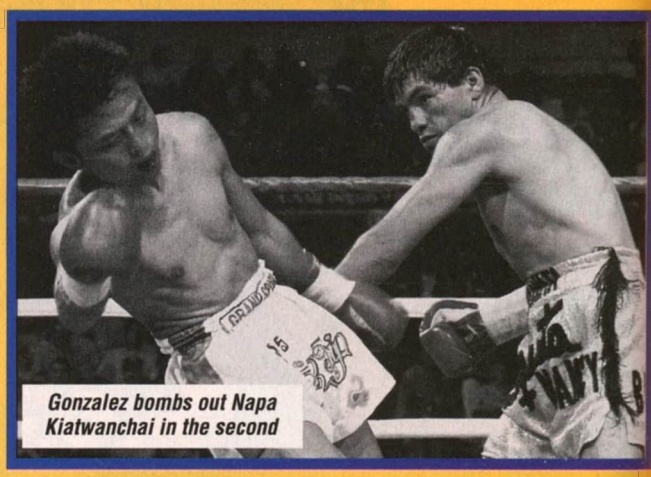
81 HUMBERTO "CHIQUITA" GONZALEZ

Record: 43-3 (31)

Years Fought: 1984-'95

Titles Held: WBC Light Flyweight 1989-'90, '91-93, '94-'95; IBF Junior Flyweight 1994-'95





Gonzalez bombs out Napa Kiatwanchai in the second

Jesus Zuniga takes a vicious left

Best Punch: Gonzalez had a scorcher of a left hook, and it almost got him a quick knockout against nemesis Michael Carbajal in their first match. Though it didn't do the trick that night, it did most others.

Greatest Knockout: Gonzalez overwhelmed undefeated challenger and future titlist Francisco Tejedor in three rounds in March 1990 in Mexico.

Statistical Analysis: After 24 fights, Gonzalez was 24-0 with 21 knockouts, an 88 percent kayo rate. Over his remaining 22 fights (starting with his first title challenge), the kayo rate was just 45 percent.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In three tries, Gonzalez couldn't stop Carbajal; "Little Hands of Stone" stopped him in seven rounds in a wild, seesaw slugfest in 1993's Fight of the Year. In the second and third matches, Gonzalez boxed cautiously and took two close decisions.

Beyond The Punch: Gonzalez wasn't all hooks and aggression. We saw in the second and third Carbajal fights that he could box, too, when he wanted to. He had a very effective left jab for a shorter guy and a surprisingly tight defense when in boxer mode.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In the last fight of his career, Gonzalez was pummeled and stopped by hard-punching Saman Sorjaturong in another Fight of the Year slugfest.

82 BOBBY CHACON

Record: 59-7-1 (47)

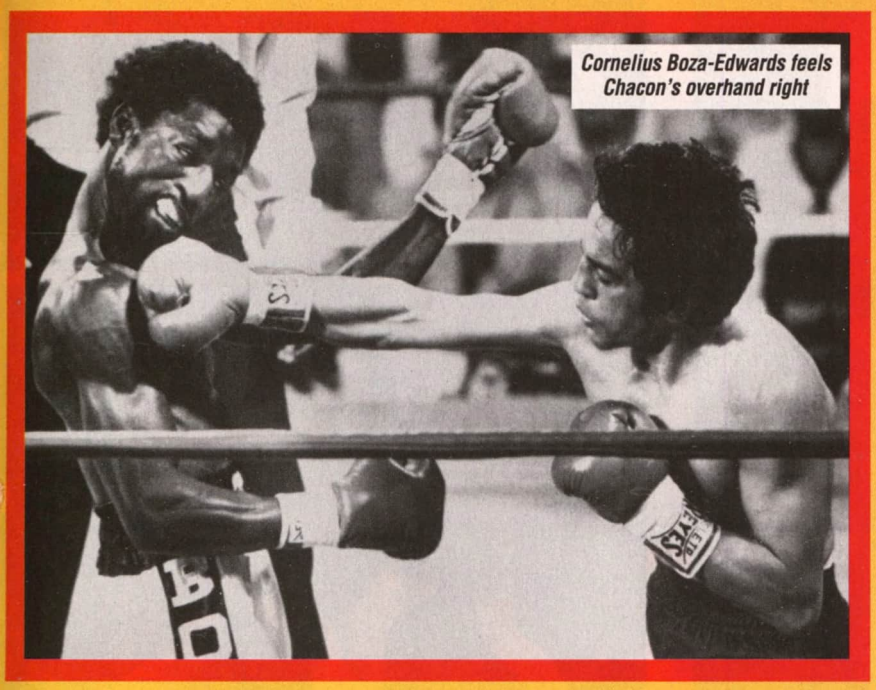
Years Fought: 1972-'88

Titles Held: WBC Featherweight 1974-'75; WBC Super Featherweight 1982-'83

Best Punch: Chacon could take you out with either hand, but the overhand right carried the most pop.

Greatest Knockout: In a hugely anticipated fight between powerpunching prospects in May 1974 in California, Chacon outslugged future featherweight king Danny "Little Red" Lopez and stopped him in the ninth round.

Statistical Analysis: Six of Chacon's seven career losses—86 percent—were to other major titleholders. Chacon had an unusual little streak in '73-'74 in which four of his five fights were ninth-round knockout wins.

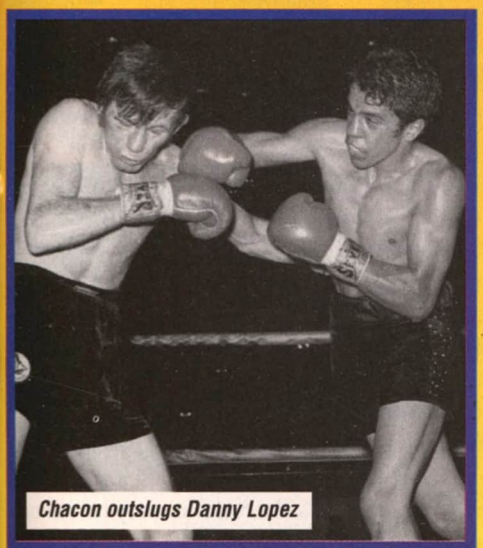


Cornelius Boza-Edwards feels Chacon's overhand right

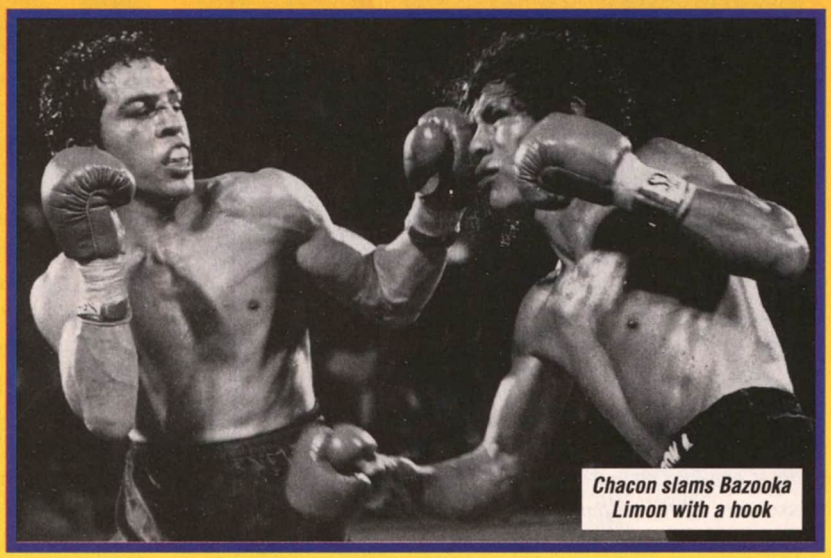
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Chacon's gritty series with Bazooka Limon featured, in order, a 10-round win for Limon, a technical draw, another win for Limon, and a thrilling decision win for Chacon in THE RING's 1982 Fight of the Year.

Beyond The Punch: At his peak, Chacon was a ball of two-fisted power who loved a good brawl and didn't include defense in the plan.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Even great hitters fall to the legends. Ruben Olivares twice stopped Chacon: in nine rounds in June 1973, and again in two rounds two years later for the WBC featherweight title. Chacon decisioned him in August '77, but by then Olivares was on his last legs.



Chacon outslugs Danny Lopez



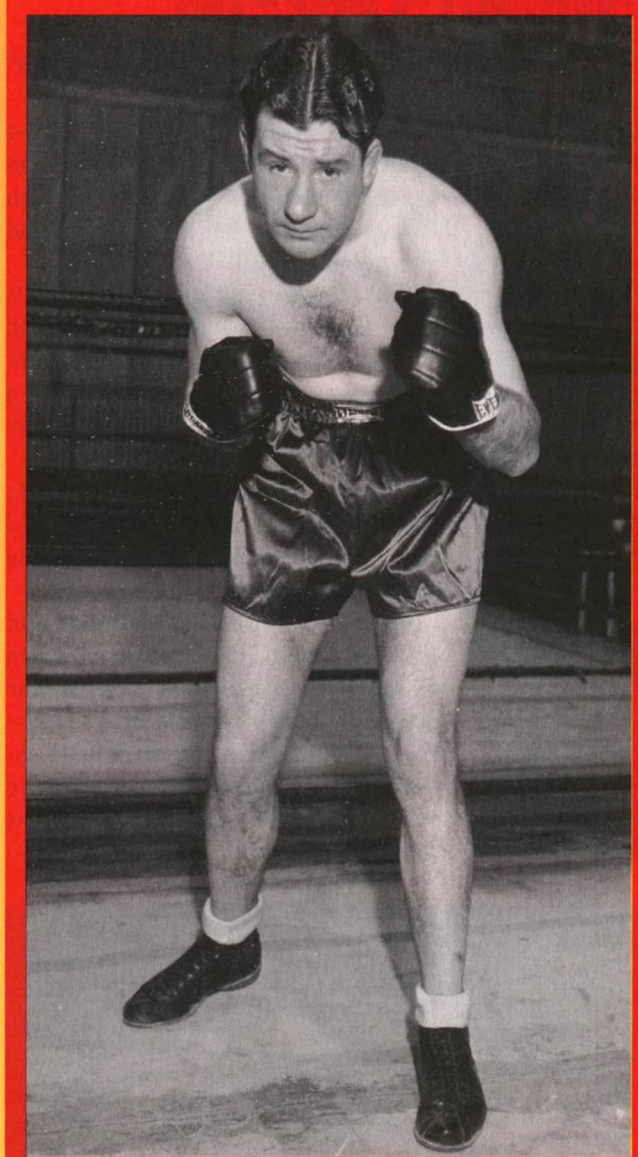
Chacon slams Bazooka Limon with a hook

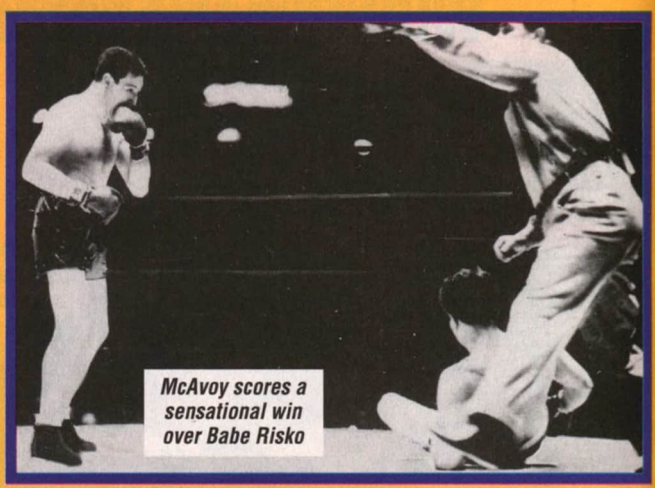
83 JOCK McAVOY

Record: 132-14-1 (89)

Years Fought: 1927-'45

Titles Held: none





McAvoy scores a sensational win over Babe Risko

McAvoy (right) fires a left at Al McCoy

Best Punch: McAvoy didn't care if he missed with the right hand the first 10 times he threw it, because he knew that when he landed it, he'd be in business.

Greatest Knockout: McAvoy floored middleweight titleholder Babe Risko with his first punch of the fight—a looping right hand—in their non-title bout at Madison Square Garden in December '35. Risko went down five more times and was stopped in the first round.

Statistical Analysis: McAvoy's 89 knockouts place him near the top of the all-time list among non-champions, and his 61 percent kayo rate over a 147-bout career is noteworthy.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: McAvoy couldn't get the job done against Len Harvey, who twice decisioned him over 15 rounds for the British light heavyweight title.

Beyond The Punch: McAvoy wasn't overly scientific; he liked to get in close, get a guy in range for the right hand, and let it go. He took a good shot, but slick guys outboxed him.

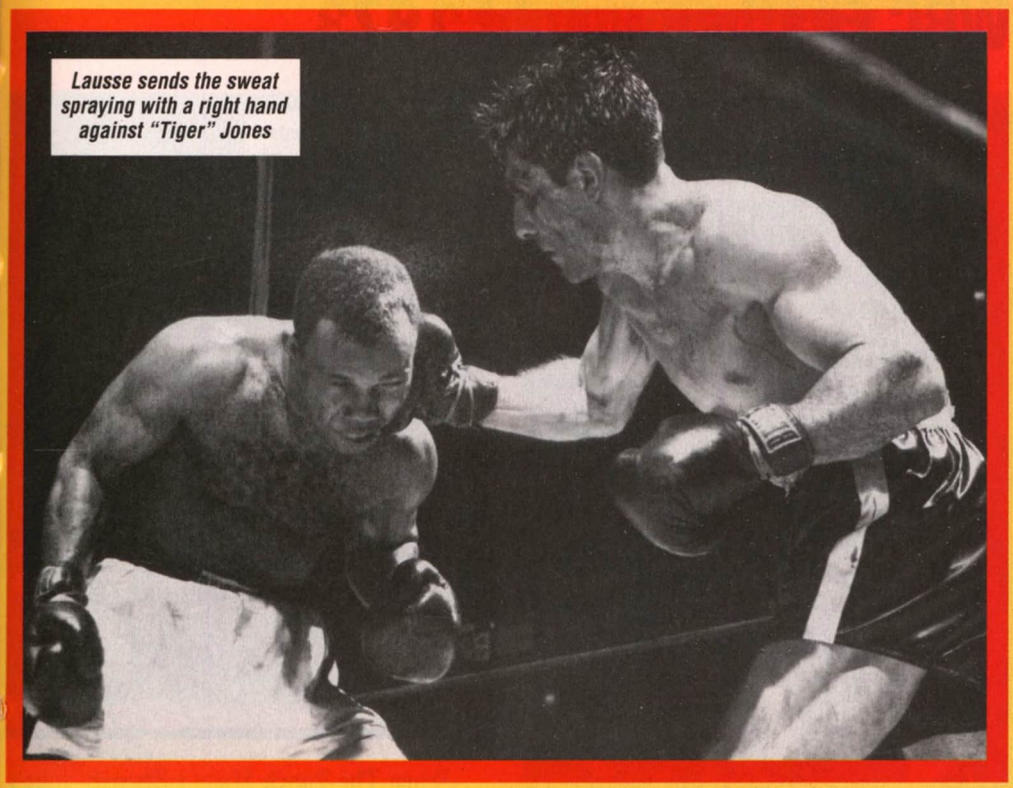
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: McAvoy hurt world light heavyweight champion John Henry Lewis in the fourth round of their March '36 title fight in New York, but the rest of the way he was outclassed. Lewis beat him up inside and took a lopsided decision.

84 EDUARDO LAUSSE

Record: 71-9-3 (58)

Years Fought: 1948-'60

Titles Held: none



Lausse sends the sweat spraying with a right hand against "Tiger" Jones

Best Punch: Lausse's left hand was hard enough to drop Gene Fullmer in the eighth round of their 1955 bout (won by Lausse on decision) and it cleaned out the middleweight division, at least of Argentine fighters.

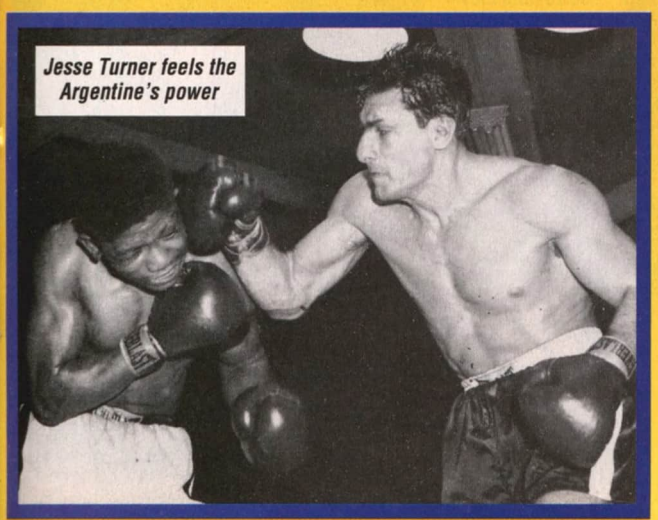
Greatest Knockout: Just before decisioning Ralph "Tiger" Jones in New York, Lausse stopped the very capable George Small in the fourth round in Boston in April '55.

Statistical Analysis: In the United States, Lausse was 12-2-1 with nine knockouts—a 60 percent kayo rate. Everywhere else: 59-7-2 with 49 stops—a 72 percent rate.

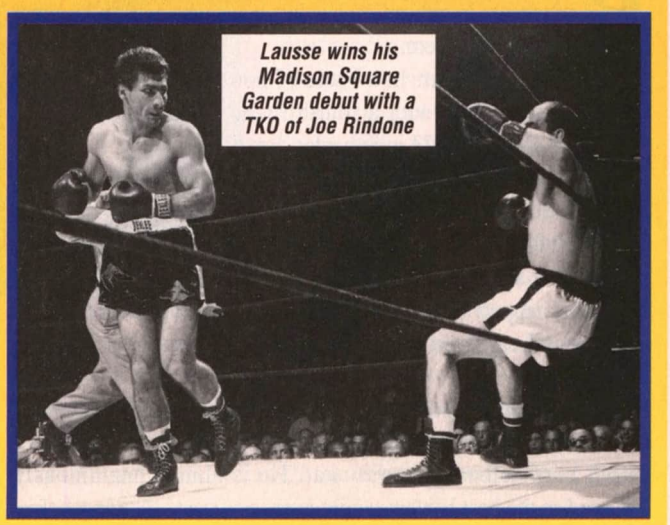
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Kid Gavilan wasn't stopped in 143 bouts, and that includes the two he split with Lausse. Gavilan beat him on points over 10 rounds in Buenos Aries in September '52, and Lausse returned the favor in September '55 over 12 rounds, also in Buenos Aries.

Beyond The Punch: Lausse was an aggressive, steady fighter. If he didn't take you out early, he wore you down and took you out late.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Andres Selpa outpointed Lausse in Buenos Aries in August '56 and two months later stopped him in the 13th to take the South American and Argentine middleweight titles.



Jesse Turner feels the Argentine's power



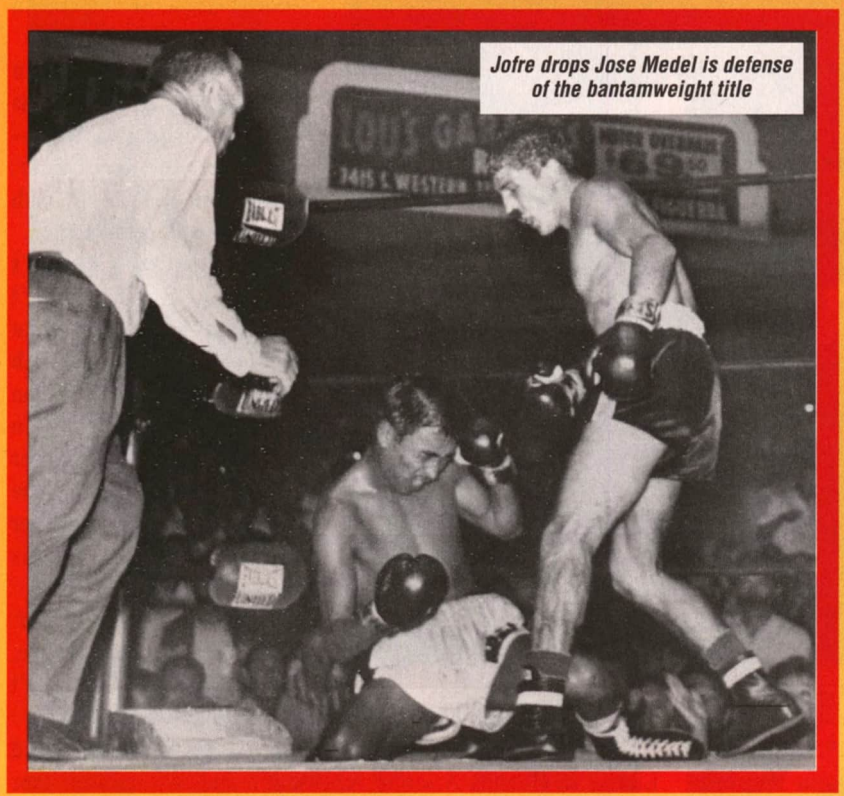
Lausse wins his Madison Square Garden debut with a TKO of Joe Rindone

85 EDER JOFRE

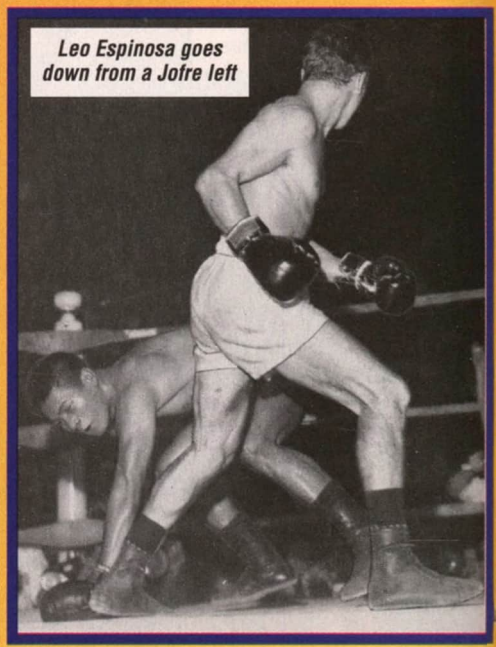
Record: 72-2-4 (50)

Years Fought: 1957-'76

Titles Held: World Bantamweight 1961-'65; WBC Featherweight 1973



Jofre drops Jose Medel is defense of the bantamweight title



Leo Espinosa goes down from a Jofre left

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Jofre's struggles with the scales were largely to blame for his two decision losses to Fighting Harada, in May '65 and June '66.

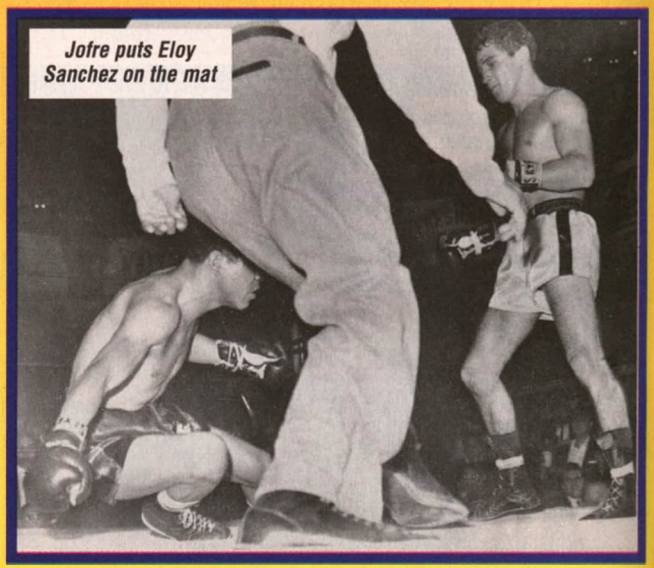
Best Punch: Jofre was the picture of a guy who had knockout power in either fist. His left hook was one of the great punches of the era.

Greatest Knockout: In a battle of greats, Jofre defended the featherweight crown with a fourth-round stoppage of Vicente Saldivar in October 1973 in Salvador, Brazil.

Statistical Analysis: Between June 1960 and November '64, Jofre scored 17 consecutive knockouts, in an average of seven rounds. Oddly, five of those knockouts occurred in the 10th round.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Jose Legra wasn't an easy mark, and Jofre capped off an improbable and stirring comeback by decisioning Legra to win the WBC featherweight title in Brazil in May 1973.

Beyond The Punch: Jofre was a complete prize fighter and considered in his era to be the best in the world. He could box or brawl, play defense or go to war. He is almost unanimously regarded as the best bantamweight ever.



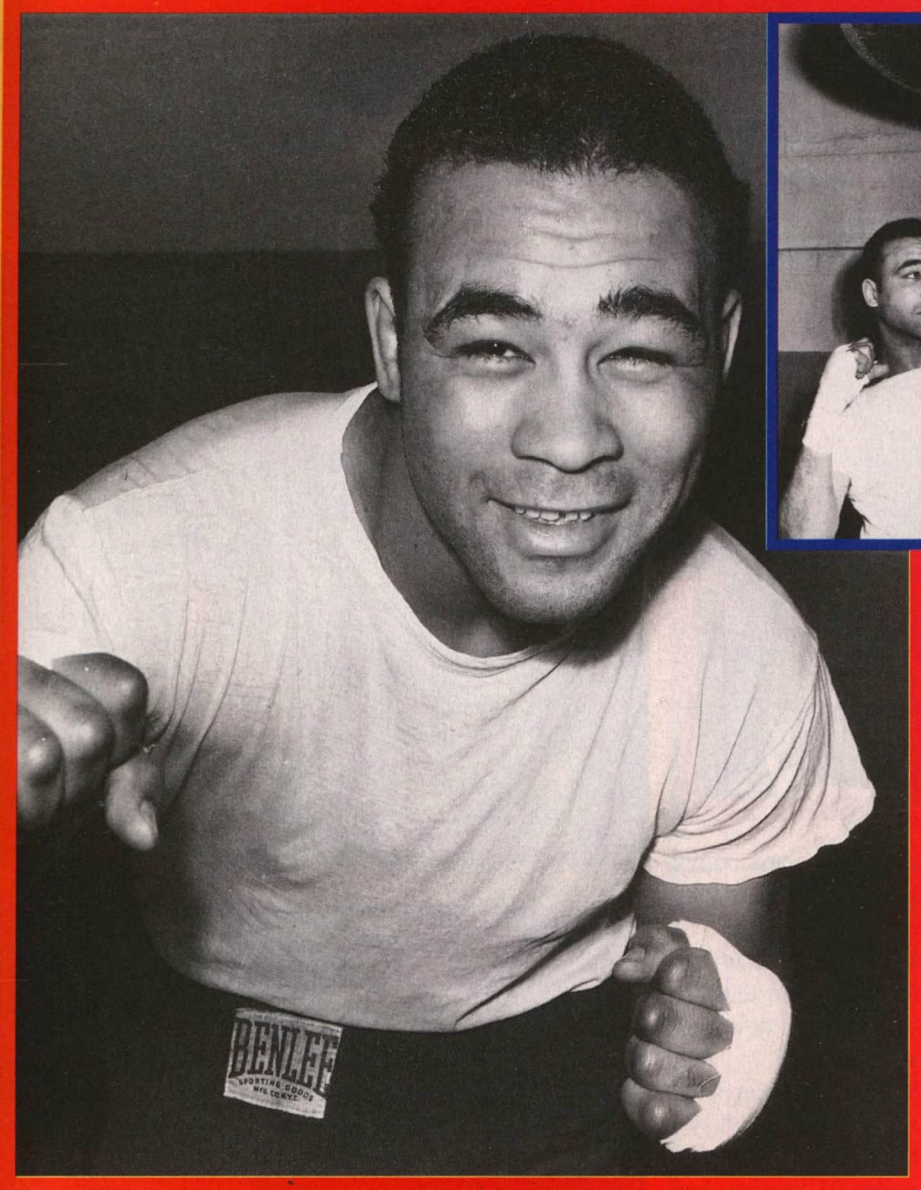
Jofre puts Eloy Sanchez on the mat

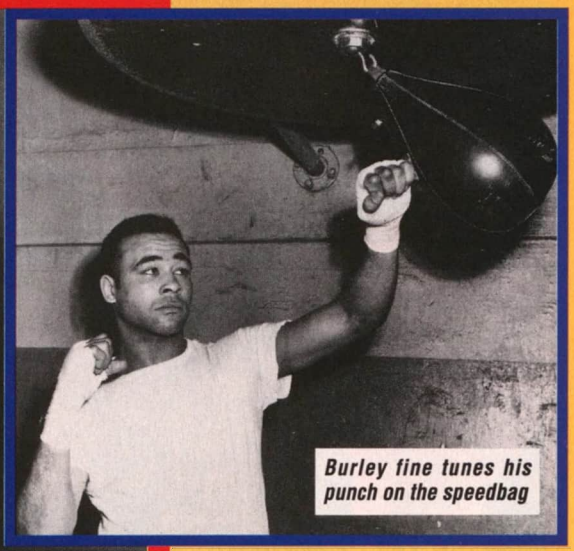
86 CHARLEY BURLEY

Record: 84-11-2 (50)
with 1 no-contest

Years Fought: 1936-'50

Titles Held: none





Burley fine tunes his punch on the speedbag

Best Punch: Burley's left hand was among the most educated in the game when he was scaring off the more famous middleweights, such as Ray Robinson, Billy Conn, Jake LaMotta, and Tony Zale.

Greatest Knockout: Burley scored the only kayo in his intense seven-fight series with the excellent Holman Williams when he stopped Williams in the ninth round in New Orleans in August 1942.

Statistical Analysis: For all his brilliance, Burley never scored more than six knockouts in a row. He did that between December 1941 and February '42.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Burley floored the great Archie Moore in their bout in April 1944 in California, but couldn't keep him down and settled for a 10-round decision win. Moore never fought him again.

Beyond The Punch: It wasn't his punch that made Burley one of the best ever to not win a title; it was the whole package. He could do everything. And in 98 fights, he never was stopped.

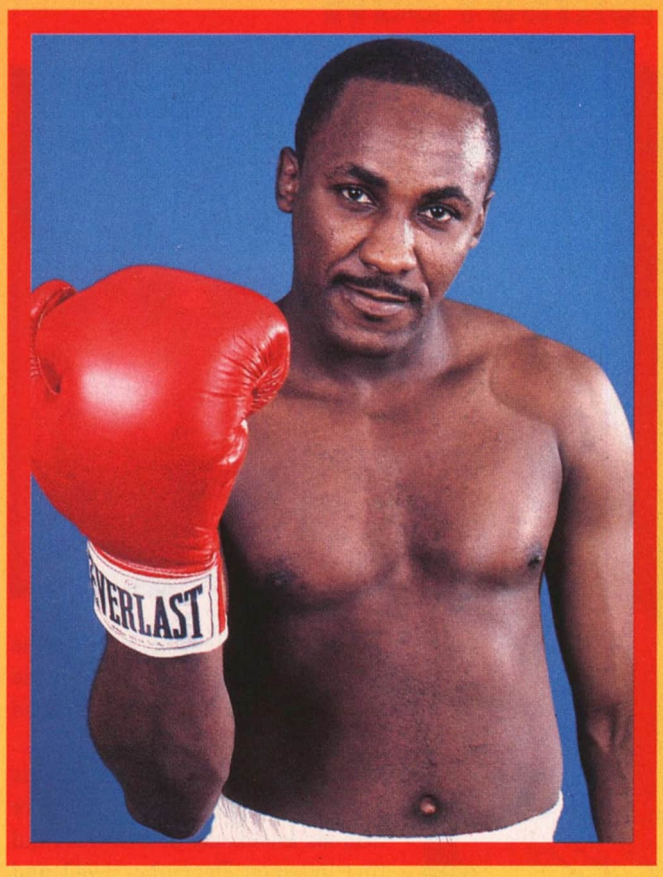
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: As great as Burley was, Ezzard Charles was greater (and bigger): They met in May '42 and June '42 in Pittsburgh, and both times Charles took 10-round decisions.

87 MIKE McCALLUM

Record: 49-5-1 (36)

Years Fought: 1981-'97

Titles Held: WBA Junior Middleweight 1984-'88; WBA Middleweight 1989-'91; WBC Light Heavyweight 1994-'95



Best Punch: McCallum was arguably the best body-puncher of his generation and his hook downstairs doubled over guys in four different weight classes.

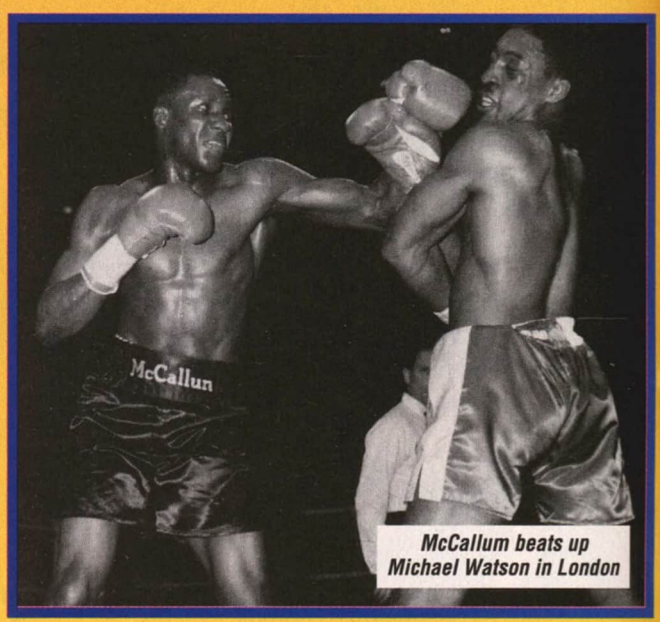
Greatest Knockout: In the highest-profile fight of his career, McCallum was trailing pound-for-pound entrant Donald Curry when a sweeping left hook put Curry down for the count in the fifth round in Las Vegas in July 1987.

Statistical Analysis: Four of McCallum's five career losses, or 80 percent, came after he turned 35 years old. His kayo percentage dropped precipitously with age; after the Curry fight at age 30, McCallum's kayo rate was 91 percent, but over the next 10 years, it was just 30 percent, leaving him with a career rate of 65 percent.

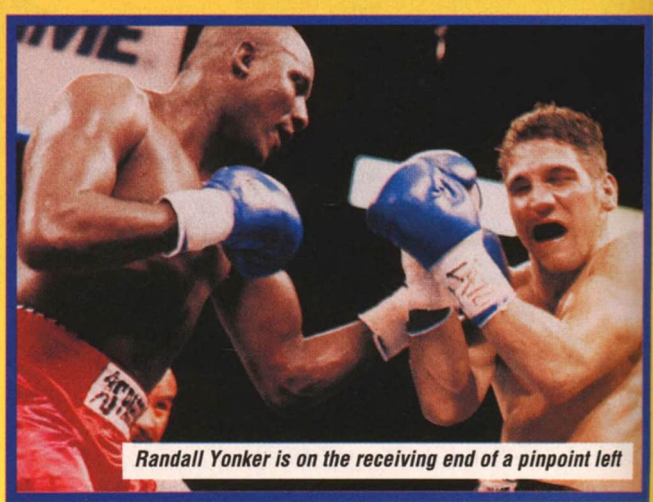
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Tricky southpaw Sumbu Kalambay gave McCallum fits in their two meetings. McCallum dropped a decision to him in Italy in March '88 and returned the favor with a difficult 12-round win in Monte Carlo in March '91.

Beyond The Punch: Not a one-punch bomber, McCallum broke guys down inside with meticulous skills, great bodywork, and one of the best chins in the business. You couldn't hurt him.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: As slick as McCallum was, James Toney was slicker, and, importantly, younger. After drawing with McCallum in December '91, Toney clearly outpointed him in the rematch in August '92.



McCallum beats up Michael Watson in London



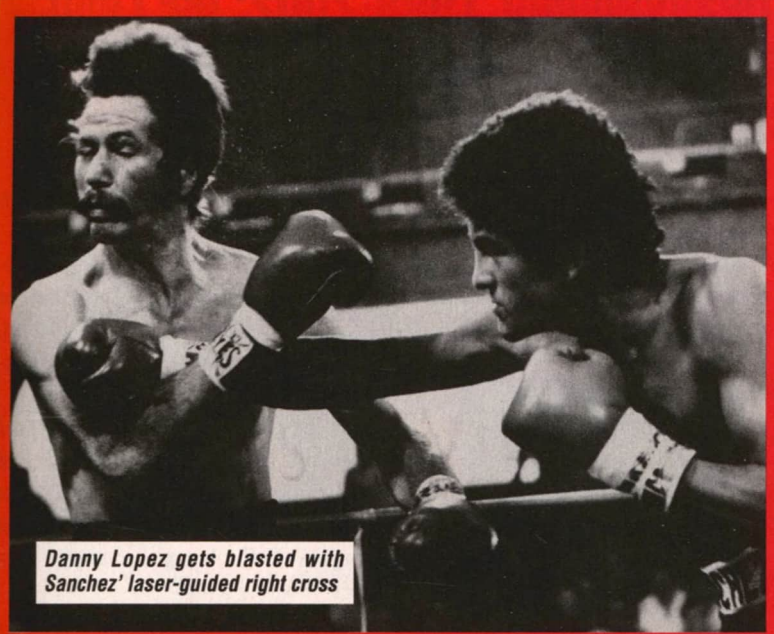
Randall Yonker is on the receiving end of a pinpoint left

88 SALVADOR SANCHEZ

Record: 44-1-1 (32)

Years Fought: 1975-'82

Titles Held: WBC Featherweight 1980-'82



Danny Lopez gets blasted with Sanchez' laser-guided right cross

Greatest Knockout: Sanchez overwhelmed and destroyed junior featherweight king Wilfredo Gomez in their superfight in August 1981 in Las Vegas, breaking his cheekbone and stopping him in eight one-sided rounds.

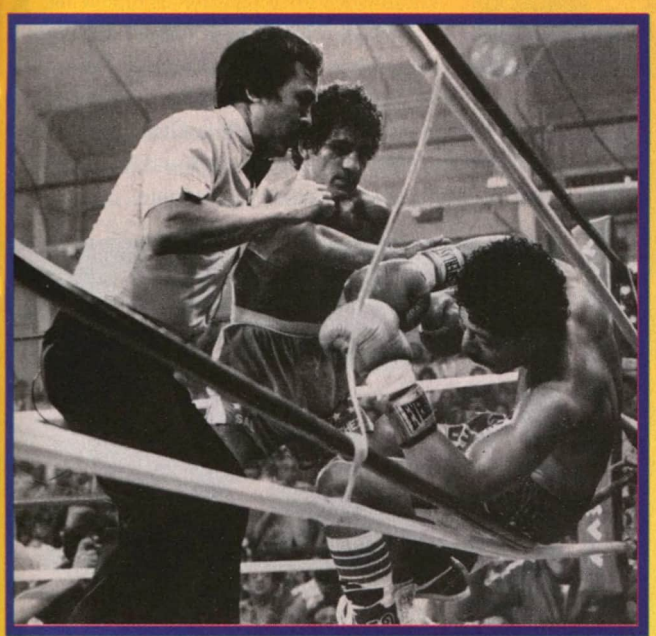
Statistical Analysis: As a contender, Sanchez had a 77 percent kayo rate and his fights lasted an average of 6.3 rounds. Starting with his title challenge against Danny Lopez, his kayo rate was 45 percent and his average fight went 13 rounds.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Juan LaPorte took Sanchez the full 15 in their title fight in Texas in December '80. LaPorte also went the distance with Eusebio Pedroza, Wilfredo Gomez, Julio Cesar Chavez, and Kostya Tszyu and was stopped just once in a 57-fight, 22-year career.

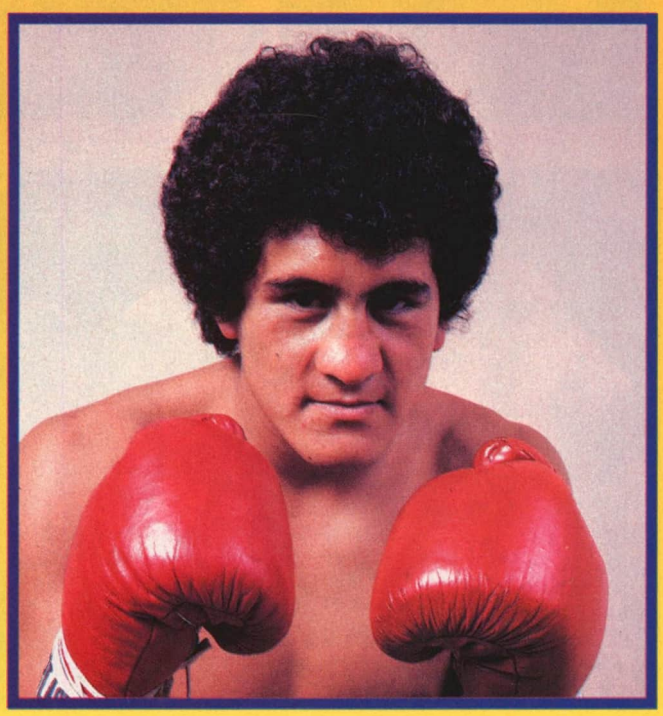
Beyond The Punch: Sanchez was an astute tactician who got his knockouts by wearing guys out with movement and sharp punches and then, at the right time, opening up.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Antonio Becerra outpointed Sanchez for the vacant Mexican bantamweight title in Mexico in September 1977.

Best Punch: More a stylist with pinpoint accuracy than an outright banger, Sanchez' right cross was a laser, and when he landed it over and over on the same spot all night, guys went.



Sanchez whips previously unbeaten Wilfredo Gomez



89 ROY JONES

Record: 48-1 (38)

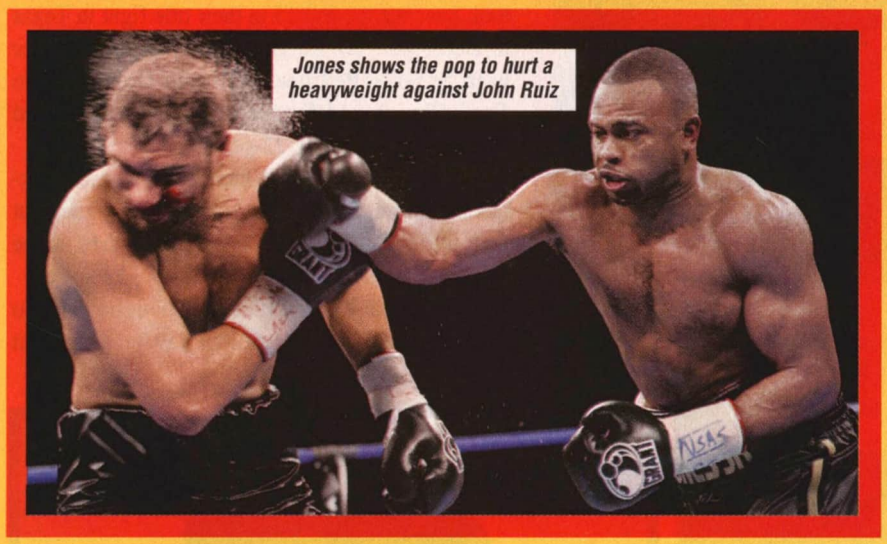
Years Fought: 1989-Present

Titles Held: IBF Middleweight 1993-'94; IBF Super Middleweight 1994-'96; WBC Light Heavyweight 1996-'97, 1997-2002; WBA Light Heavyweight 1998-2002; IBF Light Heavyweight 1999-2002; World Light Heavyweight 1999-present; WBA Heavyweight 2003-present

Best Punch: When Jones is inclined to shoot for the knockout, he cranks out left hooks—sometimes three or four in combination, if it takes that many.

Greatest Knockout: Avenging his lone professional defeat, Jones pancaked tricky Montell Griffin with a single left hook in the first round of their rematch, held in Connecticut in August '97.

Statistical Analysis: Jones stopped his first 17 pro opponents, in an average of 3.4 rounds. In title fights, he's kayoed 14 of 23 opponents, a solid 61 percent, but in non-title fights, he's an awesome 24-for-26, or 92 percent.

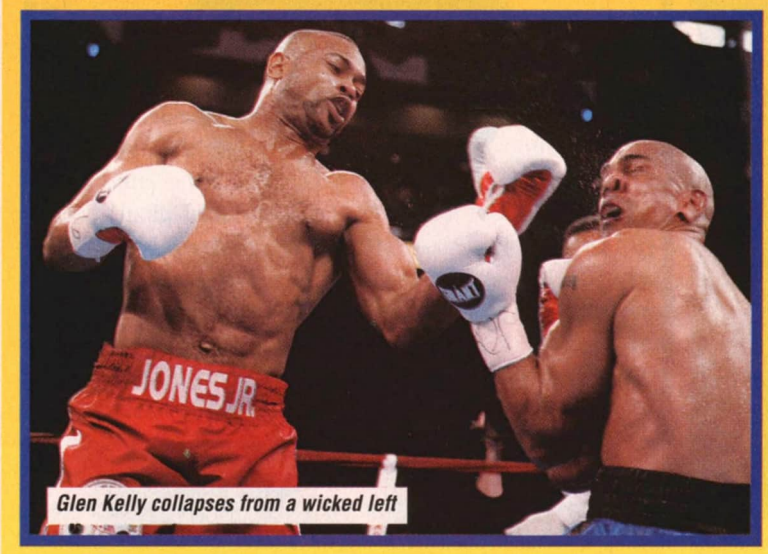


Jones shows the pop to hurt a heavyweight against John Ruiz

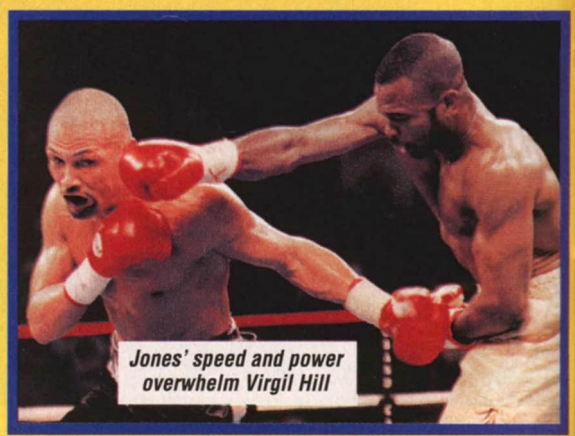
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Jones was too fast for eventual middleweight champ Bernard Hopkins when they met for the vacant title in May 1993 in Washington, D.C., but never appeared to hurt him.

Beyond The Punch: Jones' uncanny speed and ring intelligence mark him as probably the best fighter of his generation, even if his tendency toward caution often produces bland performances and has diminished his reputation as a puncher.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: It was Jones' power that started the trouble against Griffin in their first match, in March 1997 in Atlantic City. While Griffin was down, Jones belted him, and the champ was disqualified when Griffin appeared unable to continue.



Glen Kelly collapses from a wicked left



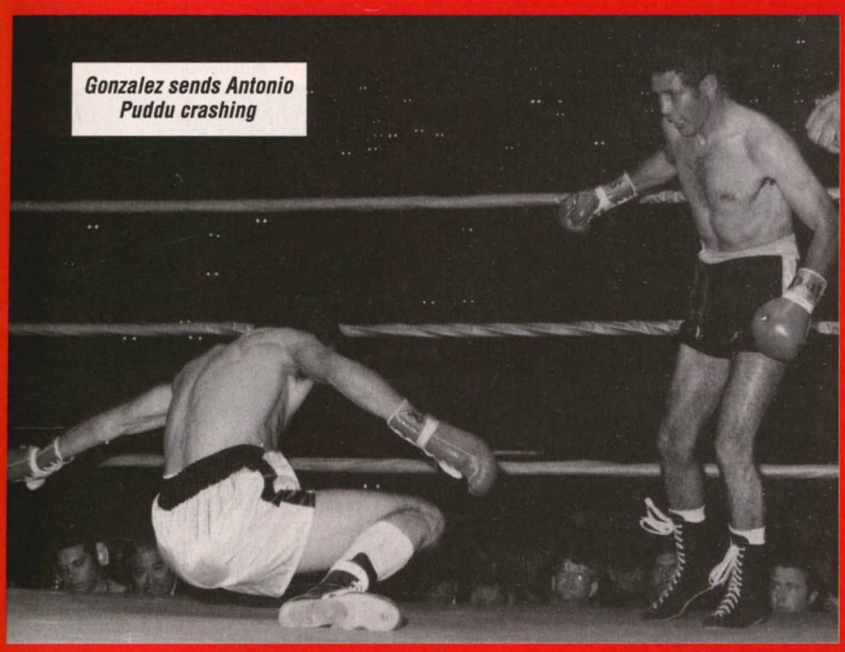
Jones' speed and power overwhelm Virgil Hill

90 RODOLFO GONZALEZ

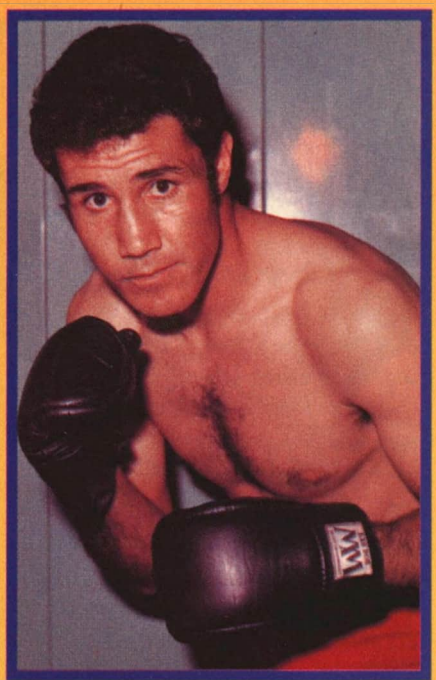
Record: 81-7-1 (70)

Years Fought: 1959-'74

Titles Held: WBC Lightweight 1972-'74



Gonzalez sends Antonio Puddu crashing



Best Punch: Gonzalez' left hook to the liver was one of the more debilitating punches of the era.

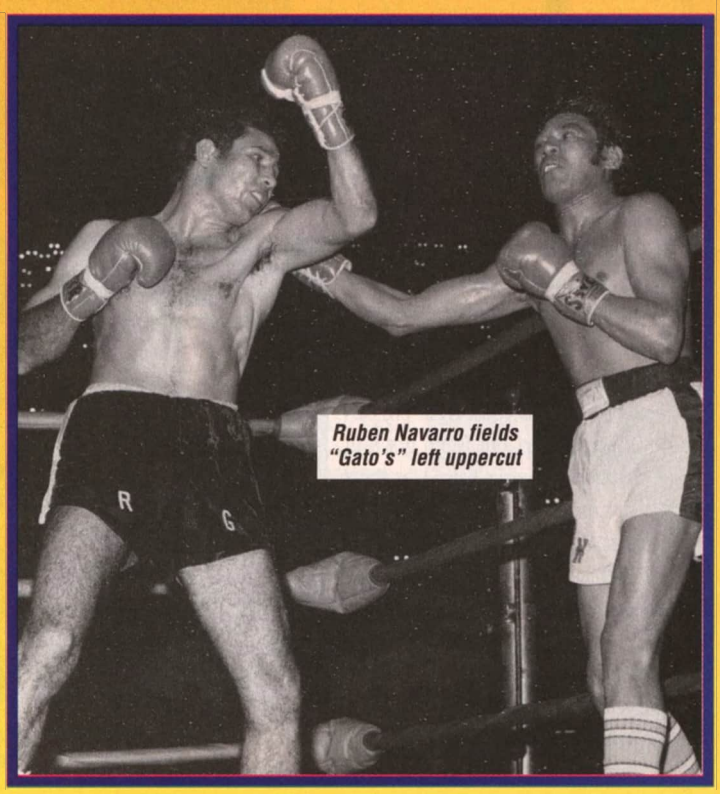
Greatest Knockout: Gonzalez was a 3-1 underdog going into his title fight with Chango Carmona in November 1972 in Los Angeles. Gonzalez backed him up throughout and hammered him with heavy combinations until Carmona surrendered after the 12th round.

Statistical Analysis: "El Gato" knocked out his first 35 opponents and was 52-0 (50) when he lost for the first time. Of those 50 stoppages, 16 were first-rounders.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Tough Bobby Valdez had Gonzalez' number. They fought three consecutive times in 1965 and '66, with Valdez winning the first and third. The second was a technical draw.

Beyond The Punch: Gonzalez was a relentless aggressor with heavy hands and a wealth of physical strength. He could be outboxed over the distance, and especially later in his career, was susceptible to cuts over his left eye.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: The excellent Antonio Cervantes came off the floor to stop Gonzalez on a cut in the eighth round of their match in California in December '70.



Ruben Navarro fields "Gato's" left uppercut

91 NIGEL BENN

Record: 42-5-1 (35)

Years Fought: 1987-'96

Titles Held: WBC Super Middleweight 1992-'96

Benn connects with a flush left against Chris Eubank

Best Punch: Benn scored several spectacular knockouts with the left hook, but the straight right hand was his bread and butter.

Greatest Knockout: Iran Barkley took Thomas Hearns' best right crosses and never backed up, but Benn got him out of there in a single round in their slugfest in Las Vegas in August 1990.

Statistical Analysis: Benn won his first 22 fights by kayo, 20 within the first three rounds. Three of his five losses, or 60 percent, came in his last three fights.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Awkward Thulane Malinga never gave Benn a clear shot at him. He took Benn the full 10 rounds in Birmingham in May '92 in a losing effort, and then ended Benn's title reign with a split decision win in Newcastle in March '96.

Benn wins a dramatic punchers' battle against Gerald McClellan

Beyond The Punch: Benn put everything behind every punch he threw, and if you could withstand that—few could—and could punch, you had a chance; four of his five career losses were by knockout.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In a huge fight in the United Kingdom, hard-hitting and eccentric Chris Eubank stopped Benn in nine rounds in Birmingham in November '90.

92 "IRISH" BOB MURPHY

Record: 66-11-1 (59)

Years Fought: 1945-'54

Titles Held: none

Murphy knocks out Lloyd Marshall in the fourth round

Best Punch: The southpaw Murphy's booming overhand left was one of the harder single punches in the history of the light heavyweight division. It wasn't Foster's hook or the Spinks Jinx, but it wasn't far behind.

Greatest Knockout: In his first fight after the final loss to Ray Robinson, Jake LaMotta met Murphy in New York in June 1951. After seven rounds, LaMotta surrendered on his stool, one of just four stoppage losses suffered over a 106-bout career.

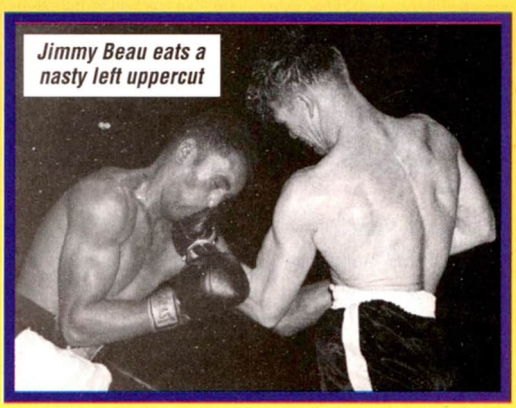
Statistical Analysis: Over his career, Murphy compiled knockout streaks of seven, eight, nine, 10, and 13 fights. Three of his seven career decision wins, or 43 percent, came consecutively in 1952.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In back-to-back fights in March 1952, journeyman Roy Thomas took Murphy the full 10 rounds. Murphy won both decisions.

Beyond The Punch: Murphy was no Fancy Dan. He went in there and measured guys for the right hand. Consequently, he could be outboxed.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Murphy's only shot at the title came in August 1951 in New York against future Hall of Famer Joey Maxim. Maxim was too slick and his chin too good. He shook off Murphy's best right hand bombs and decisioned him over 15 rounds.

"Irish Bob" hands Jake LaMotta a rare stoppage loss



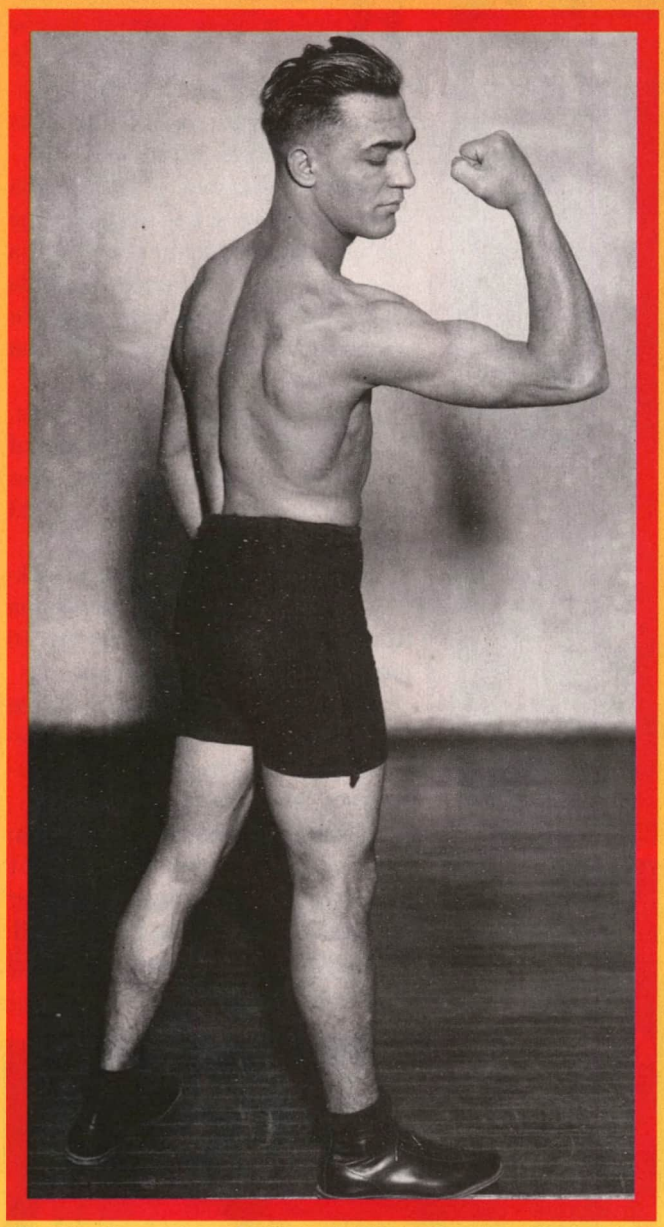
Jimmy Beau eats a nasty left uppercut

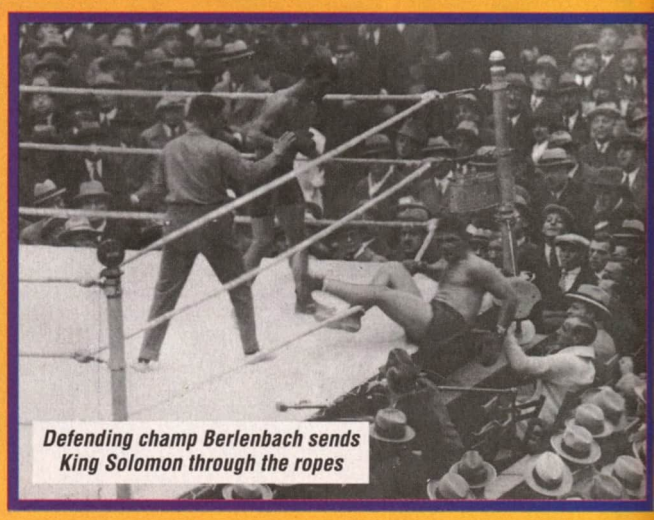
93 PAUL BERLENBACH

Record: 39-8-3 (33)
with 1 no-contest

Years Fought: 1923-'33

Titles Held: World Light Heavyweight 1925-'26





Defending champ Berlenbach sends King Solomon through the ropes

Best Punch: A converted southpaw, Berlenbach was the best bodypuncher of his generation. His left hook to the ribs was among the most feared punches in the business, and it didn't tickle to the head, either.

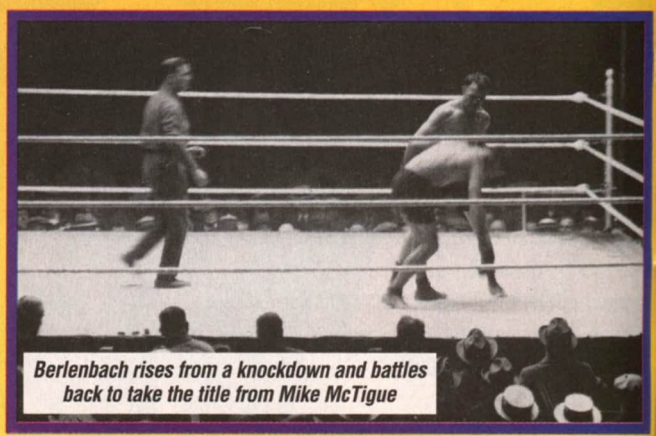
Greatest Knockout: Berlenbach brutalized former champion Battling Siki in March 1925 in New York and stopped him in the 10th round. He won the world title against Mike McTigue in his next bout.

Statistical Analysis: Berlenbach won his first three fights and five of his first eight by first-round kayo. Overall, he scored nine first-round knockouts, representing 27 percent of his career knockout total.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: The great Young Stribling held Berlenbach to a six-round draw in August '24 in New York, then lasted the 15-round distance with him in June '26, also in New York.

Beyond The Punch: A former Olympic wrestler of some note, Berlenbach relied primarily on his punch, physical strength, and toughness. Most of the time that was enough.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: All-time great Mickey Walker decisioned Berlenbach over 10 rounds in a non-title bout in November '27 in Chicago.



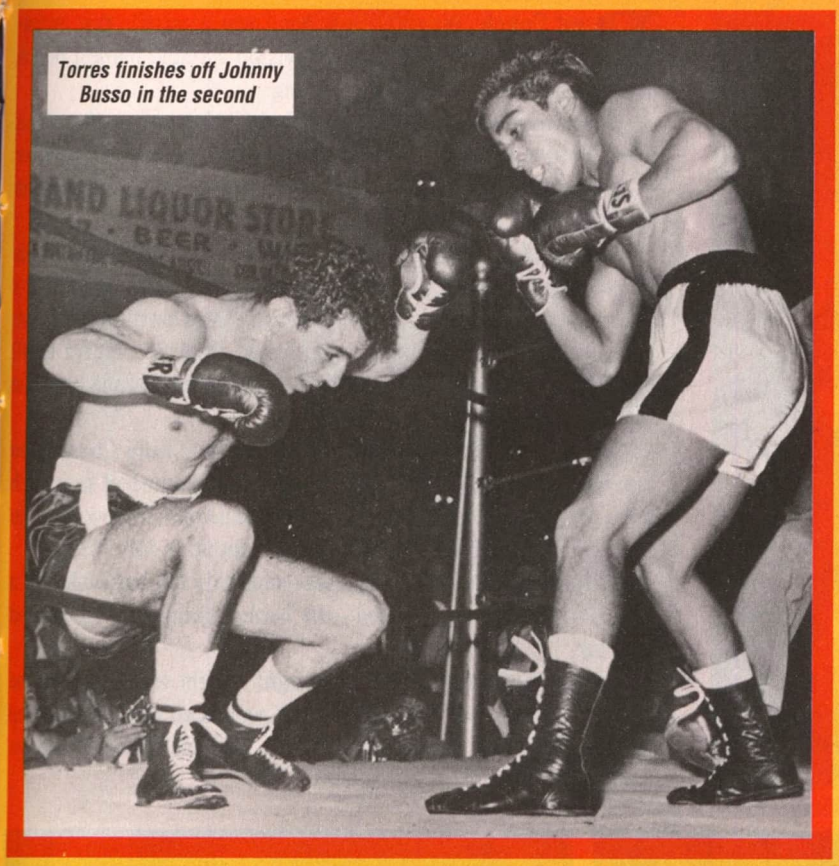
Berlenbach rises from a knockdown and battles back to take the title from Mike McTigue

94 BATTLING TORRES

Record: 56-9 (46)
with 1 no-contest

Years Fought: 1957-'67

Titles Held: none



Torres finishes off Johnny Busso in the second

Best Punch: Considering his many flaws, Torres' crunching left hook took him a good long way.

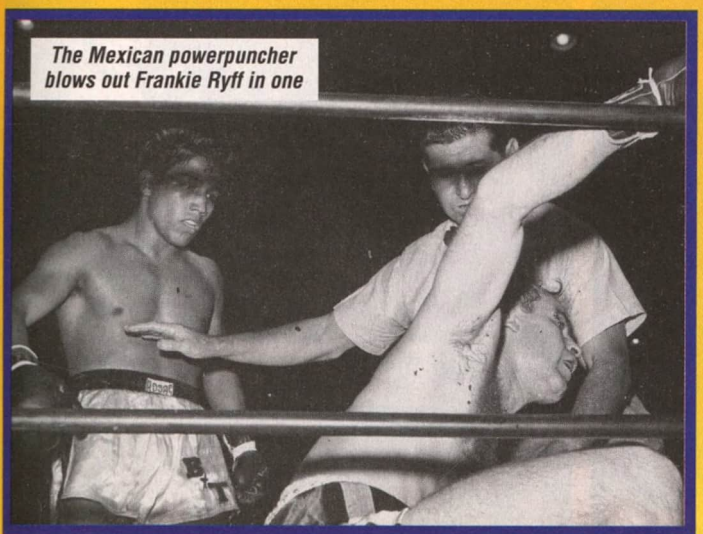
Greatest Knockout: In October 1959 in California, Torres blew out the excellent Johnny Busso in two rounds. Within the previous two years, Busso had split a pair of bouts with Joe Brown and split a pair with Carlos Ortiz.

Statistical Analysis: Torres never lost a fight by decision, making the overall proportion of his bouts that ended in a knockout 83 percent.

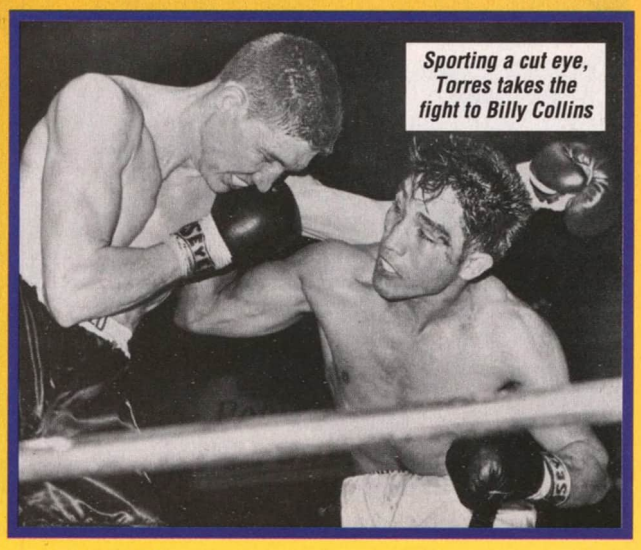
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: One-time Mexican featherweight titlist Victor Manuel Quijano twice extended Torres the full 10-round distance.

Beyond The Punch: Torres was a great hitter full of flaws: He wasn't hard to find, he didn't take a great shot, and he cut. If he got the hook in early, he was very dangerous. If not, he was in trouble, particularly against good competition.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Torres was 31-0 when he challenged Ortiz for the junior welterweight title in February 1960 in California, but Ortiz destroyed him. By the time Torres was stopped in the 10th, he'd won only one round on the judges' cards and he bled from cuts on his nose, below his left eye, and on his left cheekbone.



The Mexican powerpuncher blows out Frankie Ryff in one



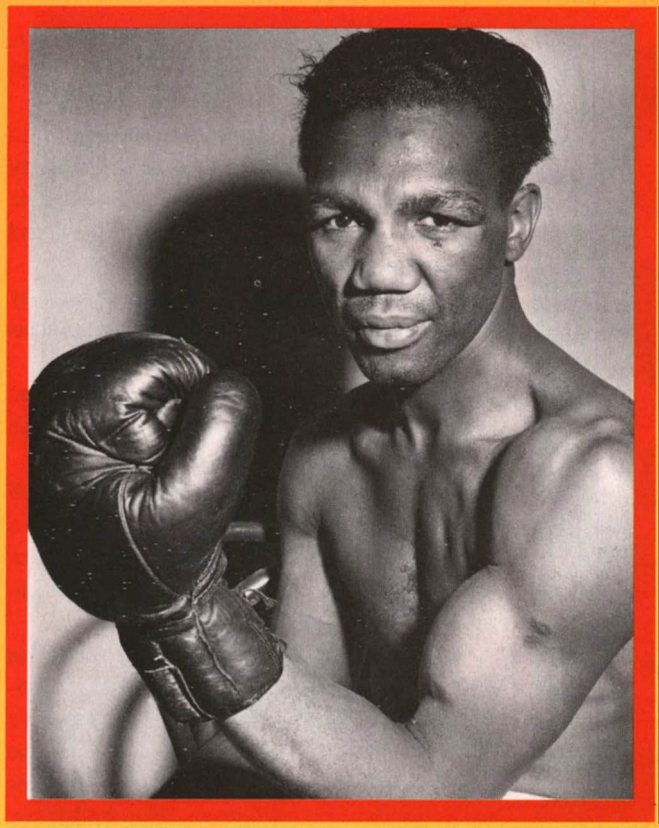
Sporting a cut eye, Torres takes the fight to Billy Collins

95 CHALKY WRIGHT

Record: 150-40-15 (75)
with 1 no-contest

Years Fought: 1928-'48

Titles Held: World Featherweight 1941-'42



Best Punch: Wright's right hand was a missile that probably was the featherweight division's single hardest punch until Sandy Saddler came along.

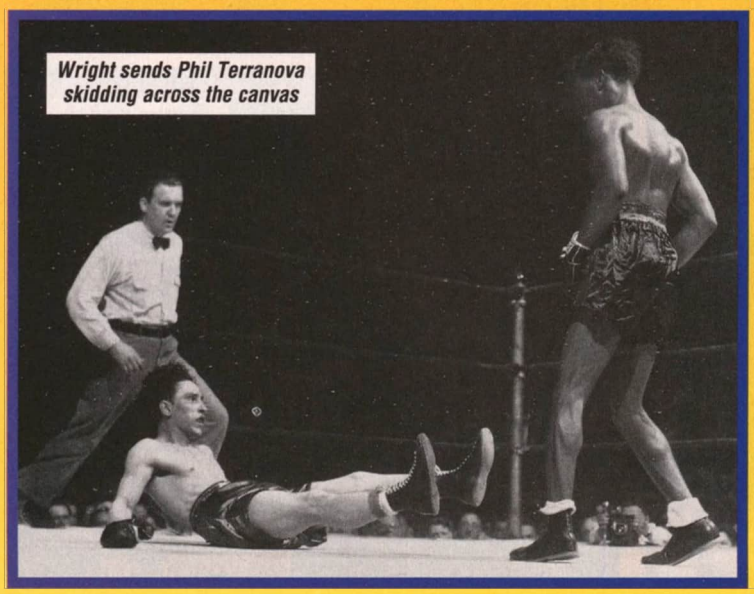
Greatest Knockout: It took him 14 years to get there, but when Wright finally got a shot at the world title—on September 11, 1941, in Washington, D.C.—he flattened Joey Archibald in the 11th round.

Statistical Analysis: Eight of Wright's 40 losses came in his last 10 fights. In fact, if you cut off the last 22 fights of Wright's career (when he was clearly in decline and only scored two knockouts), his overall kayo rate goes up from 36 percent to 40 percent, and he still would rank quite high on the all-time kayo list with 73.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: The excellent Lulu Constantino lost his three-fight series with Wright, but he pushed him each time: Wright took eight- and 15-round decisions in New York in 1942, and dropped a 10-rounder to Constantino in July '43.

Beyond The Punch: Wright was unusually tall and lanky for a featherweight and long-armed—the perfect build for a right-hand puncher.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Wright was made for the great Willie Pep, who loved it when guys loaded up the right. Pep whipped him four times, the first time in September '44 for the world title.



Wright sends Phil Terranova skidding across the canvas

Wright blasts tough Lulu Constantino with a left

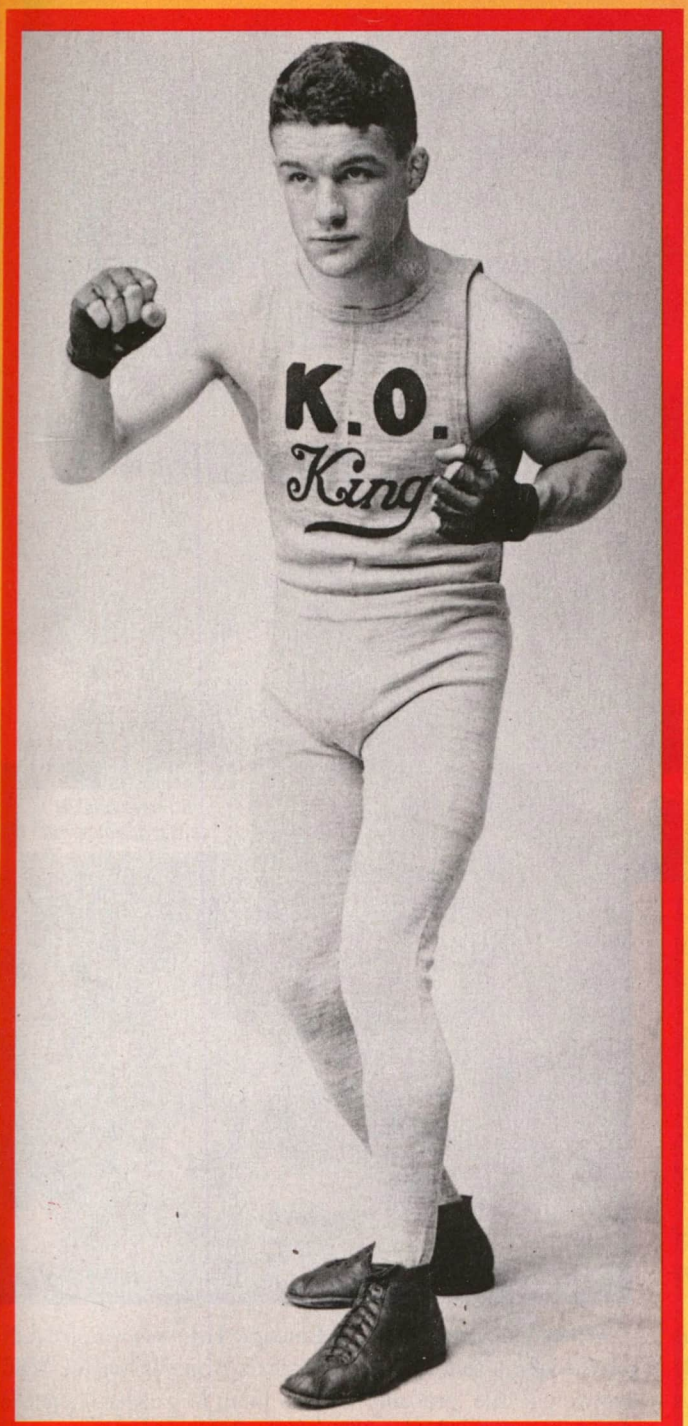
96 GEORGE "KO" CHANEY

Record: 117-20 (92)

with 56 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1910-'25

Titles Held: none



Best Punch: When the southpaw Chaney wanted to hurt a guy, he wound up with the left. It didn't have to be straight or short, it just had to land.

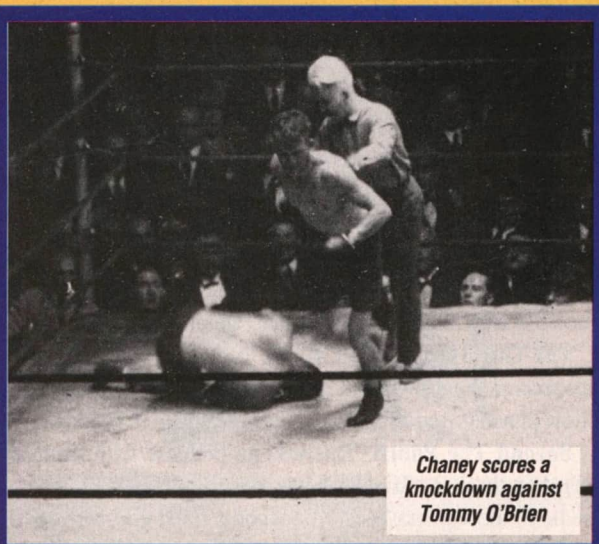
Greatest Knockout: Just before facing Johnny Dundee for the junior lightweight title, Chaney stopped Phil Salvadore in Philadelphia in November 1921 in the third round.

Statistical Analysis: Eight of Chaney's 20 losses, or a startling 40 percent, came by disqualification. In 1923 and '24, he was disqualified in three straight fights. Obviously, Chaney was a guy who could grow frustrated if he couldn't land the knockout punch.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Chaney fought Dundee seven times between 1914 and '21 and he just couldn't lick him. They fought to five no-decisions, Chaney was outpointed in 10, and in their last meeting, was disqualified in the fifth round.

Beyond The Punch: Chaney was a crude, wholly unskilled brawler, so just imagine the punch he had if despite that he knocked out damn near 100 guys over a 15-year career.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: In his only shot at the featherweight title, Chaney met the great Johnny Kilbane in Ohio in September 1916. He was out of his class, and Kilbane, who wore the crown for 11 years, destroyed him in three rounds.



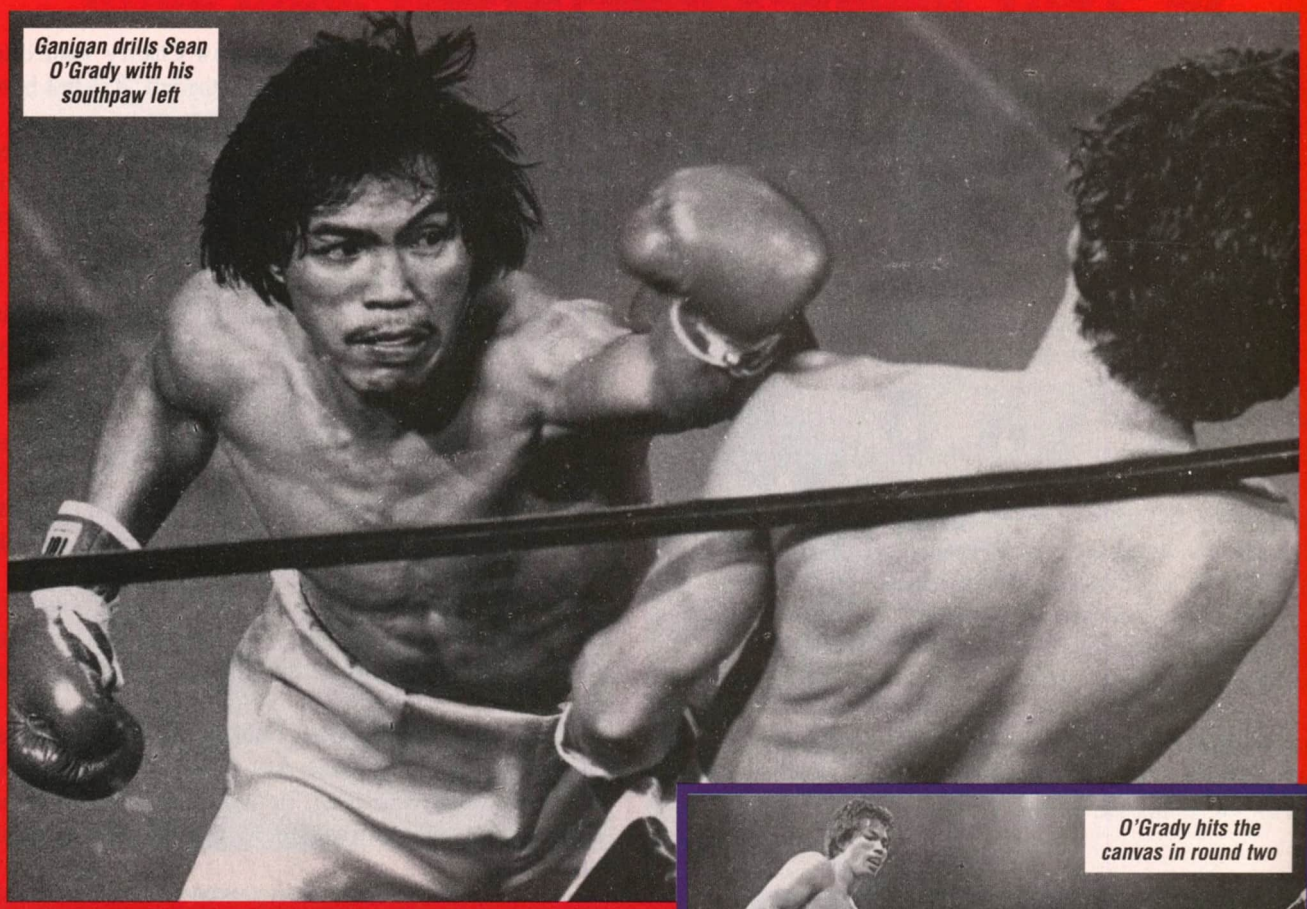
Chaney scores a knockdown against Tommy O'Brien

97 ANDY GANIGAN

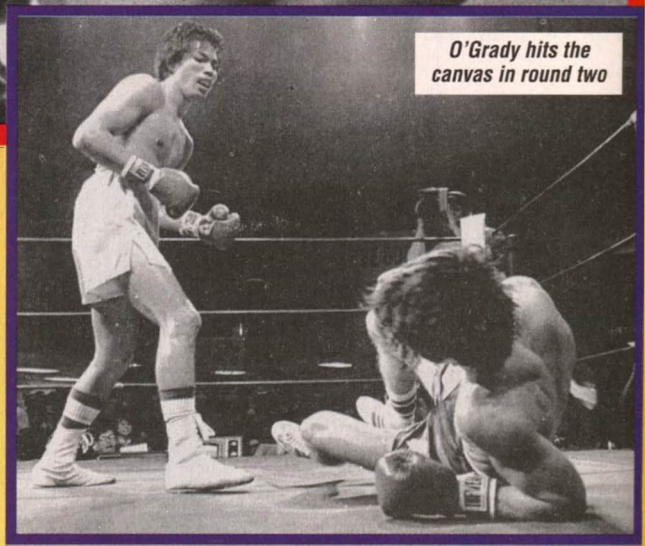
Record: 34-5 (30)

Years Fought: 1972-'83

Titles Held: none



Ganigan drills Sean O'Grady with his southpaw left



O'Grady hits the canvas in round two

Best Punch: The southpaw Ganigan's right hook was a showstopper, but so was the overhand left he liked to ram down guys' throats. He was all puncher.

Greatest Knockout: In the most important fight of his career, Ganigan flattened former WBA lightweight titlist Sean O'Grady in two rounds in Arkansas in October 1981.

Statistical Analysis: Between October '75 and October '77, Ganigan scored 16 straight knockouts. After 25 fights, his record read 25-0 with 23 knockouts, a kayo rate of 92 percent.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In an important matchup of prospects in June 1981 in California, Ganigan was outpointed by fellow puncher Rodolfo "Gato" Gonzalez over 10 rounds.

Beyond The Punch: This was no pretense with Ganigan; he rushed in throwing knockout punches. That was it. If you could handle it and tag him back, you stood a good chance; four of his five losses were by kayo.

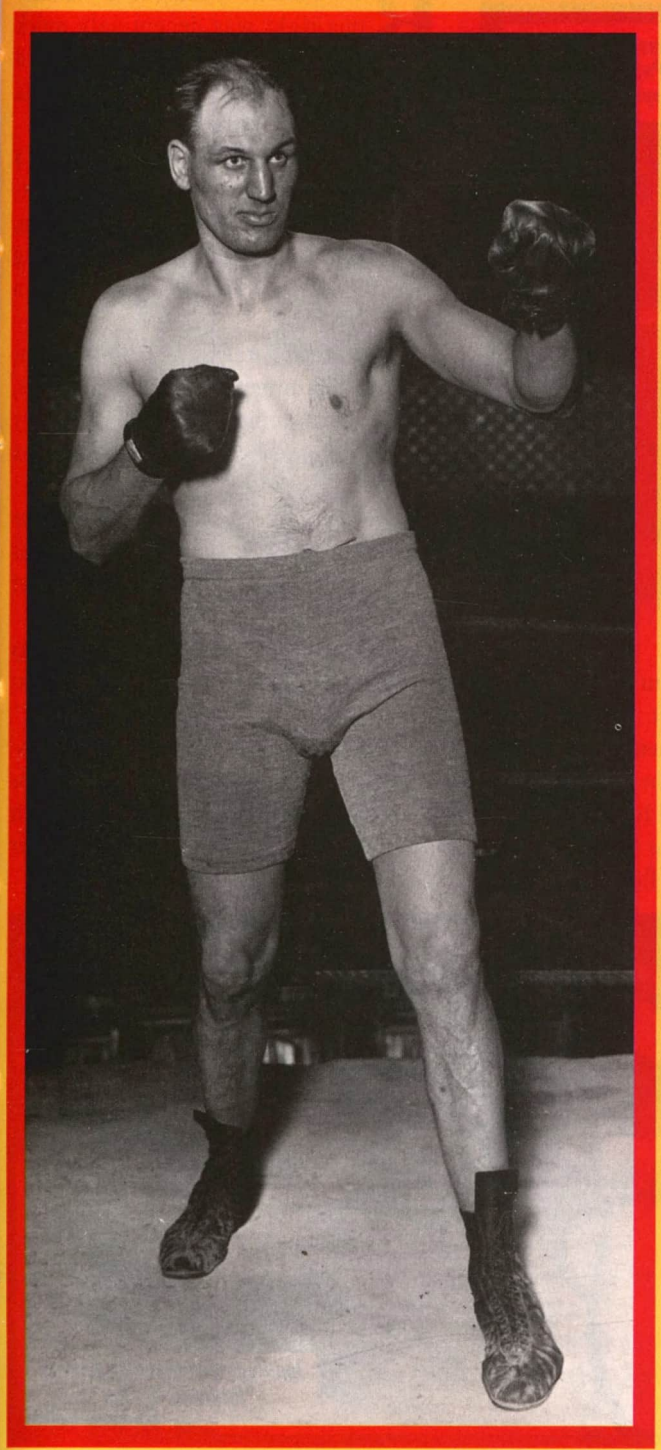
When The Punch Wasn't Enough: His win over O'Grady got Ganigan a shot at the great Alexis Arguello for the WBC lightweight title, probably the last thing he needed. Arguello picked him apart and stopped him in the fifth round.

98 FRED FULTON

Record: 81-15-4 (72)
with 13 no-decisions

Years Fought: 1913-'33

Titles Held: none



Best Punch: Fulton's hulking size and thudding overhand right made him a dangerous opponent for virtually any heavyweight of the era.

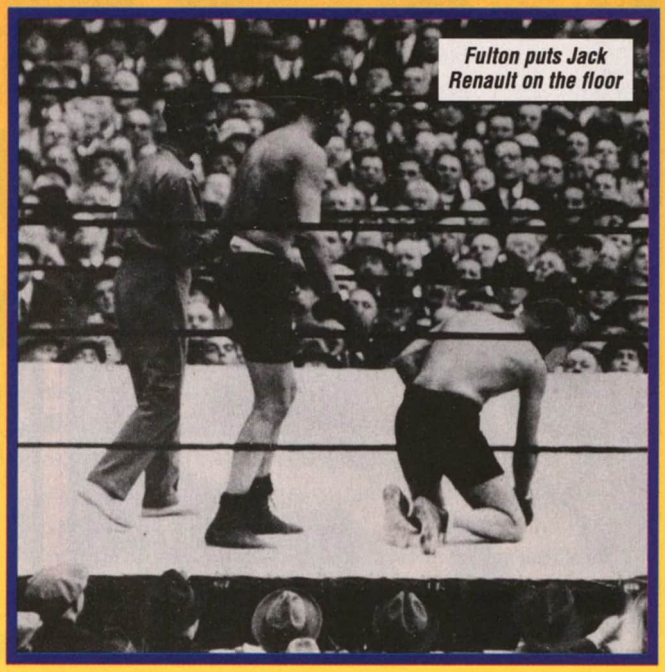
Greatest Knockout: In June 1917 in Boston, Fulton stopped the great Sam Langford, over whom he enjoyed a nine-inch height advantage, in seven rounds. He also decisioned Langford over four rounds in '18.

Statistical Analysis: Fulton's best year was 1921, when he went 10-0-1 (10), with the knockouts coming in an average of 2.4 rounds.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: Martin Burke, a sparring partner for Jack Dempsey, twice extended Fulton; Burke won a 15-round decision in Louisiana in October '22, and fought Fulton to a 10-round no-decision in October '24 in Minnesota.

Beyond The Punch: Like many of the oversized white hopes of the era, the 6'5", 220-pound Fulton was clumsy and straight-legged, but was able to use his considerable height and weight advantages against smaller, similarly crude opponents.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: They didn't call Dempsey "The Giant Killer" for nothing. Despite a great size disadvantage, he destroyed Fulton in 18 seconds in July 1918 in New Jersey. The following year Dempsey kayoed Jess Willard to win the heavyweight title.



Fulton puts Jack Renault on the floor

99 INGEMAR JOHANSSON

Record: 26-2 (17)

Years Fought: 1952-'63

Titles Held: World Heavyweight 1959-'60

Johansson brutalizes Floyd Patterson for the heavyweight title

Best Punch: Johansson's thunderous right was deceptively quick and it leveled not only Floyd Patterson, but also Henry Cooper and the then-undefeated Eddie Machen.

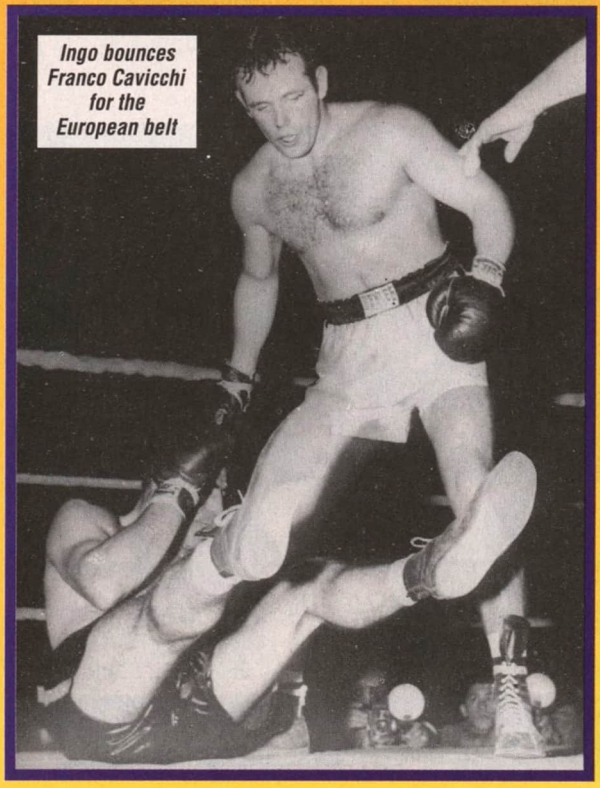
Greatest Knockout: Johansson's third-round title-winning kayo of Patterson in June 1959 was brutal. Patterson, who essentially was gone after taking Johannson's first right hand, was down seven times.

Statistical Analysis: It took Johansson a while to get the right hand home, even against competition that generally was very poor. His average fight went six rounds.

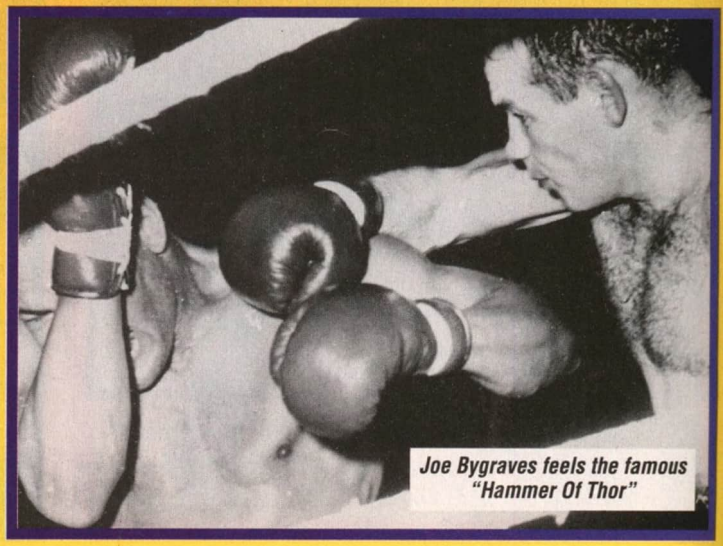
The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: In the final fight of his career, Johansson was taken the distance by Brian London, over 12 rounds in Stockholm in April 1963.

Beyond The Punch: Johansson was the picture of a one-trick pony. He had a hell of a right hand. That was about it.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: Patterson was a man on a mission when he rematched with Johannson in June 1960 in New York. He floored Johansson early in the fifth, and then knocked him cold with a left hook to regain the title. Johansson fared slightly better in the rubber match, flooring Patterson early and making it to the sixth.



Ingo bounces Franco Cavicchi for the European belt



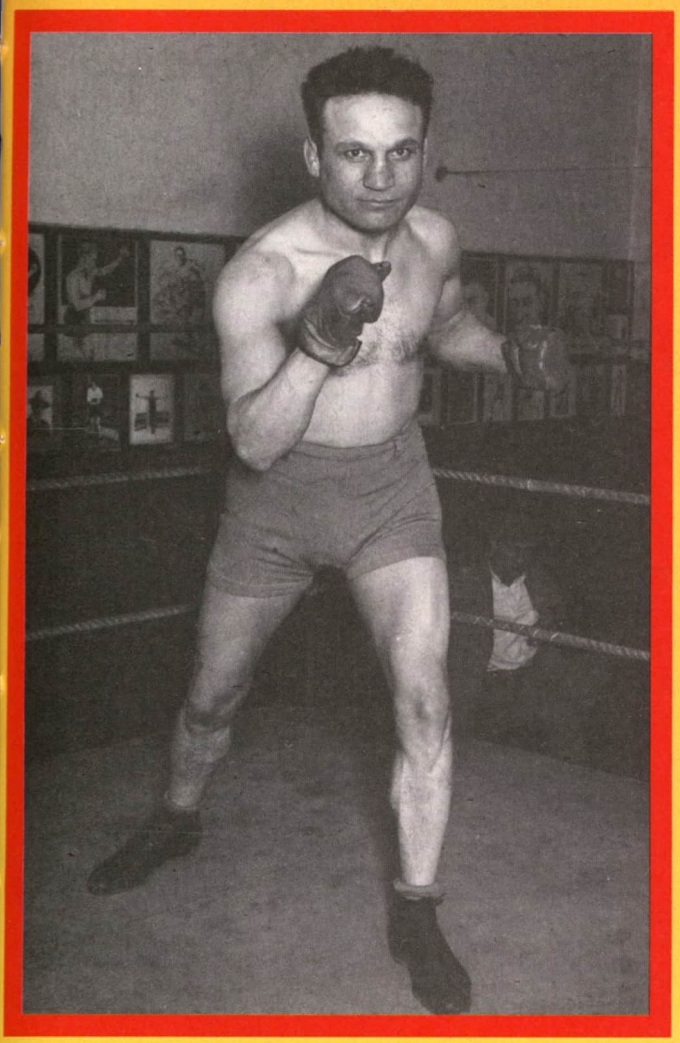
Joe Bygraves feels the famous "Hammer Of Thor"

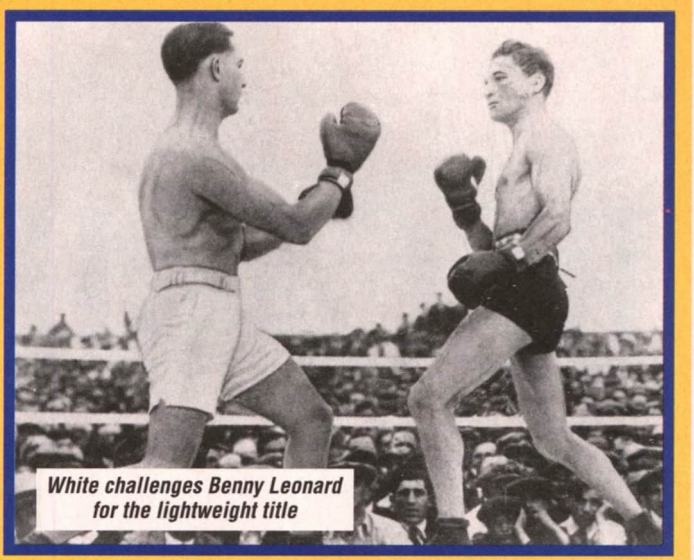
100 CHARLEY WHITE

Record: 90-16-5 (58)
with 41 no-decisions & 1 no-contest

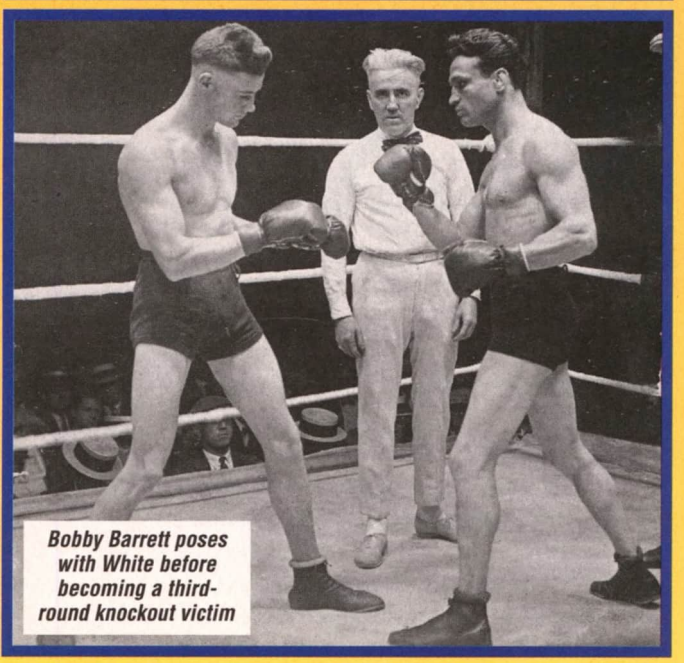
Years Fought: 1907-'30

Titles Held: none





White challenges Benny Leonard for the lightweight title



Bobby Barrett poses with White before becoming a third-round knockout victim

Best Punch: The left hook was the one thing that kept White from being a clubfighter. Alone it almost made him a champion.

Greatest Knockout: In Denver in May 1914, White stopped fellow puncher Stanley Yoakum in the 19th round of a fierce brawl. It got him a shot at champion Freddie Welsh six months later.

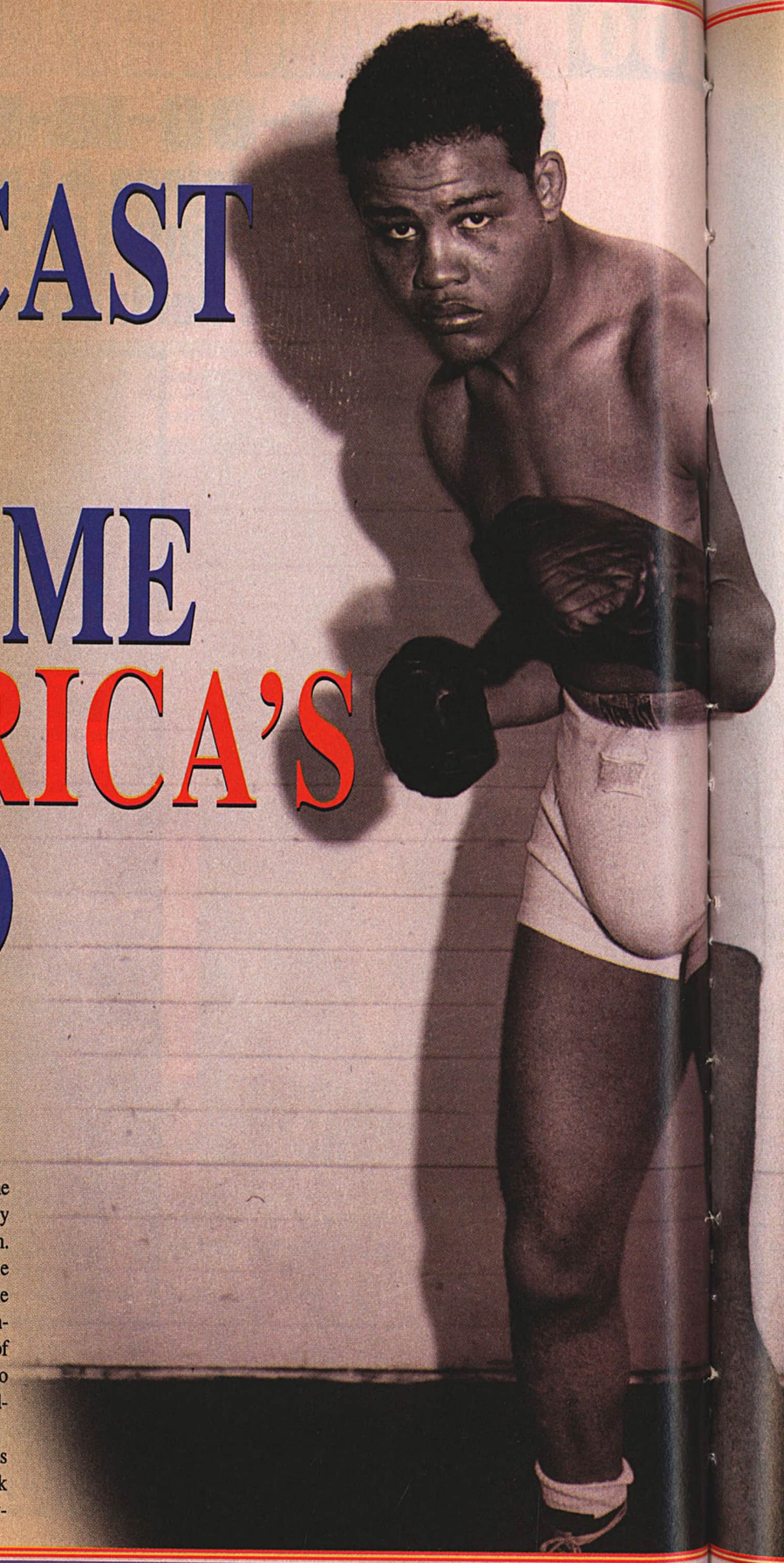
Statistical Analysis: Talk about streaky: After stopping 13 of his first 20 opponents, White went the distance in 21 straight fights.

The Guy He Couldn't Kayo: White and Johnny Dundee met seven times between 1912 and '22. They fought four 10-round no-decisions, a draw, and one decision win for each.

Beyond The Punch: They didn't come much rougher around the edges than White. He could take it as well as he could dish it out and he was always in shape, but aside from the left hook he wasn't that special.

When The Punch Wasn't Enough: White challenged the brilliant Benny Leonard for the lightweight title in Michigan in July 1920, and though he hurt Leonard early on, he was battered and stopped in the ninth round.

THE OUTCAST WHO BECAME AMERICA'S HERO



By Stanley Weston

Home for Joseph Louis Barrow was one of the hundreds of thousands of flimsy shacks that still dot America's South. During the winter, the wind cut through the paper walls like a knife, and the glow from the ancient fireplace wasn't strong enough to comfort the 10 people who made up the family of Munroe and Lillian Barrow. The only way to keep from freezing was for everybody to huddle against each other.

Summer was the best time. Summer was the time for fishing and playing hide-and-seek in the fields. Little Joe couldn't think of anything better than Alabama in the summertime. The glow of summer was more than enough to make up for sleeping five in a bed and the groaning of an empty belly.

Munroe Barrow weighed 220 pounds, and he towered 6'3" straight up. But he bent under the pressure of keeping his big brood alive, and Joe remembers the day when they carried his father away to the Searcy State Hospital for the mentally disturbed. Joe was only two at the time, but he still remembers, "You don't never forget a thing like that." Two years later, Munroe Barrow was dead.

Lillian Barrow's inheritance consisted of the ancient shack and eight hungry mouths to feed. Her only alternative was to find a new husband. The new husband was Pat Brooks, who had five kids of his own to feed. Pat and Lillian tried their best, but there just wasn't enough yield in that worn out soil to keep 15 people alive. So they did what so many others with their plight were doing: They looked to the great industrial centers of the north for survival.

Joe was 12 when the Barrows and the Brookses wound up in Detroit in 1926, following a 22-day journey that was an almost unbearable ordeal. The rundown apartment that would be their new home had electric lights and an indoor toilet that gurgled when the handle was pulled. These were things that amazed the kids who had known only smelly kerosene lamps and fly-infested outhouses.

But Detroit had its disadvantages. For the first time in his life, Joe was forced to go to school. This distressed his teachers as much as it did Joe. They couldn't understand why he had learned so little in Alabama. To try and solve the problem, they put him in a special class for retarded children.

To ease the frustrations of book learning, Joe got a job after school hours. It required him to tote 50-pound slabs of ice from one place to another. Lugging those slabs of ice was sheer joy. It didn't make any difference when a slab would slip loose from the tongs and hit the floor, where it became encased in dirt. And it didn't matter that Joe Louis Barrow mumbled, often incoherently, when he tried to talk. Joe's body grew into a mountain of muscle, but the paychecks he got from the ice company did not grow.

By the time he was 17, Joe's great ambition was to get out of grade school. It pained him when other kids made fun of his awkwardness and his size. He was the lumbering country bumpkin who couldn't fit his big legs under the desk, which was designed for sixth-graders.

His mother was disappointed when he dropped out of school, but her feelings were eased because she wanted Joe to be a violin player, and they didn't teach a boy how to play the fiddle in public school. Every afternoon, three days a week, Joe was ordered off to the violin teacher. It was humiliating to the huge young man who wanted only to work with his hands.

Joe suffered through the ordeal as long as he could stand it. His appearances at the fiddle teacher's house grew irregular, until they finally stopped completely. One day, Joe walked into the house with his violin tucked under his arm. His mother was waiting for him.

"Let me see your violin report card," she demanded.

"I threw it away," Joe answered.

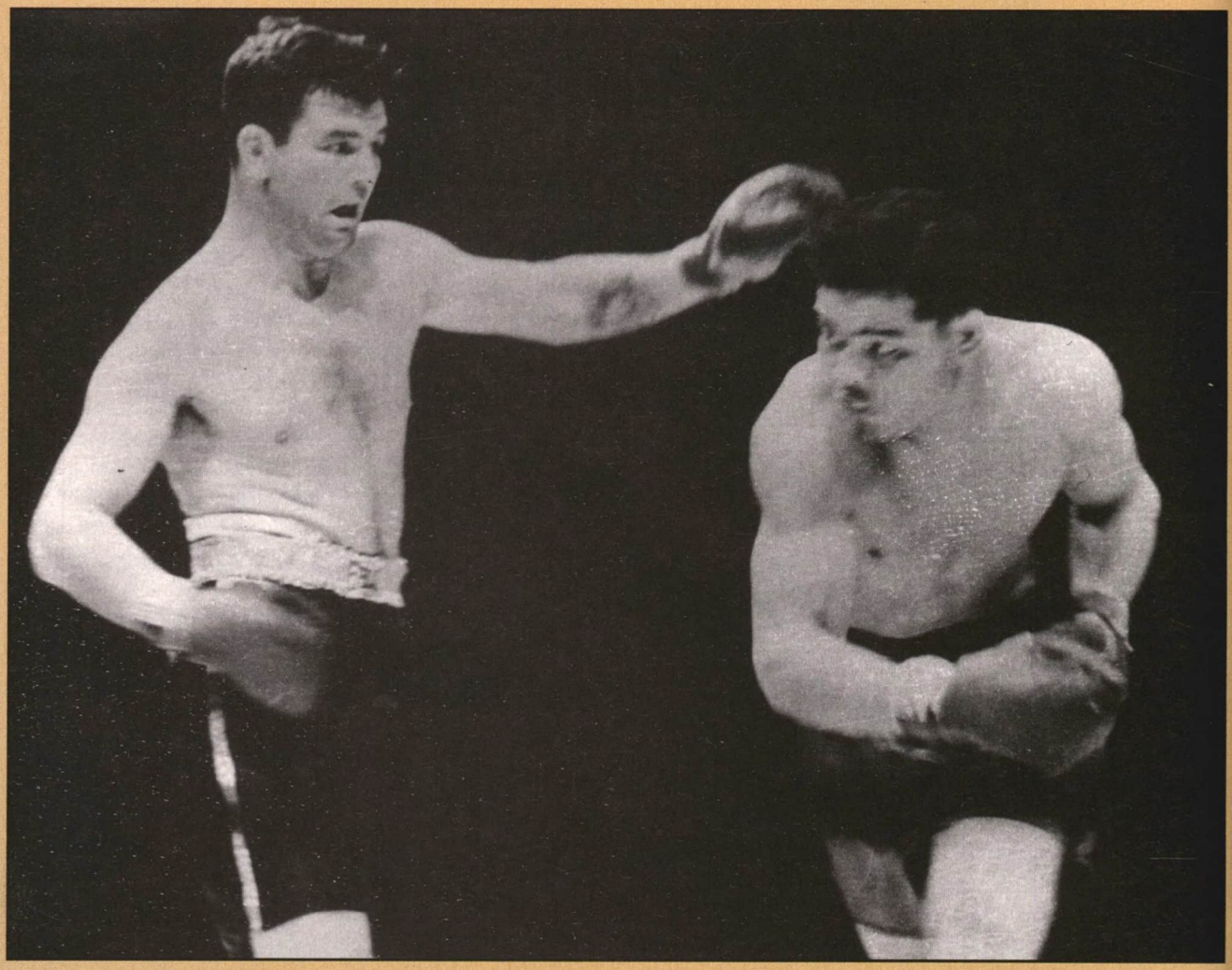
"I spend my money on giving you lessons and you throw away your chance? You really hurt your mama. Where you been going when you were supposed to be taking your lessons?"

Joe bowed his head and shrugged his great shoulders. He wasn't sure how his mother would react if he told her that he had been hanging around the Brewster Recreation Center. He finally decided to risk it.

"I've been boxing, mama. This man, Thurston McKinney, told me I can get $25 in store coupons for boxing down at the Edison Athletic Club. That's what I want to do, mama. Be a boxer. I don't care nuthin' about playin' no violin."

Lillian Barrow Brooks was a woman gifted with great understanding and insight. She remained silent and studied her embarrassed son. She looked at him for the first time as a man. She looked at his powerful body and his sad eyes. Perhaps he would make a better boxer than a fiddler. The nod she gave was her approval to Joe's idea. But after he had his first amateur bout, they both agreed that perhaps he should go back to his fiddle lessons.

Joe Louis' first bout was an incredible mismatch that would surely have taken all the heart and ambition out of a lesser man. Joe's opponent was a light heavyweight



The beginning of the most successful title reign in boxing history: Louis knocks out Jim Braddock in eight rounds to win the heavyweight title in June 1937. A record 25 title defenses would follow, which is a mark that still stands today and may never be broken.

named Johnny Miler. The name means nothing today, but in 1932, Johnny Miler was the best amateur in Michigan. A few months before he boxed the awkward country bumpkin, Miler had represented the United States in the Olympics at Los Angeles.

Although Miler didn't win an Olympic medal, he came close to destroying Joe Louis. Joe was hammered to the floor seven times. But he got up seven times, which is the important thing. In later years, Joe would recall, "Getting knocked down didn't hurt nearly as much as getting my face cut by the laces of his gloves."

When he got home after the disaster, Joe managed a sickly smile for his waiting mother, handed her seven dollars in store coupons, and went straight to bed wondering if all his fights would be as tough as this one.

The boxing art did not come easily to Joe Louis. In fact, it was almost as difficult a struggle as learning that two plus two did not make six. Holman Williams tried to teach Joe the rudiments of boxing. Williams was one of the most accomplished boxers of his time, a man who would certainly have been champion had he gotten the breaks. Louis owes Williams a large debt of gratitude because Williams laid the foundation for Joe's left jab, a punch that would develop into one of the deadliest weapons in boxing history. Holman also taught Joe how to slide his face away from punches and how to counter over an opponent's leads.

Louis respected Holman Williams, and he did what Williams told him to do. Joe enjoyed Williams' lessons on punching in combination. "Don't throw one punch and wait for the guy to fall," Holman told Joe. "Hit him again and again to make sure he falls."

The first time Louis tried a combination, he left his opponent unconscious. It was the first time he experienced the feeling of knocking out somebody, and he would never forget it. The victim was a man named George Thomas, and the amateur bout took place at the Detroit Athletic Club. Joe started the first round by scoring with two hard left jabs to Thomas' face, followed instantly by a right to the body. As Thomas was falling, Joe shot a right to the temple. Thomas laid perfectly still as he was counted out.

Knocking out an opponent gave Joe

Louis a feeling of confidence he had never known before. When he got home that night, he rushed to see his mother with a broad grin on his face. Because she rarely saw Joe grin, Lillian Barrow knew that something special had happened. Something good. She thrilled at the sight. She also liked the $25 worth of store coupons Joe handed her. Lillian Barrow became her son's most enthusiastic supporter, and she locked his old violin away for keeps.

In one of his last amateur bouts, in 1933, Joe boxed a boy named Stanley Evans. This Evans was smart. He fought with his brain more than with his fists. When he discovered that he couldn't hope to outpunch Louis, Stanley jabbed and ran, jabbed and ran. It was enough to win him the decision. Joe Louis was not to lose again until Max Schmeling knocked him out three years later.

Even in his amateur days, Joe Louis was unbeatable in return bouts. He faced Stanley Evans again, in the finals of the Detroit Golden Gloves, and beat him to capture the light heavyweight title. But the victory wasn't nearly as important as the presence of a man who was sitting in the audience and watching. John Roxborough, a wealthy black lawyer, was impressed by the way Joe Louis used his fists. He would do what he could to help the youth. John Roxborough was to change the entire course of Joe Louis' life.

Roxborough went back to the dressing room and shook Joe's hand. The partnership was made. When Joe looked at Roxborough, he saw all the things he wanted but could never have: the fitted clothes, the poise, the smooth flow of words, the class. Roxborough invested in the future of Joe Louis. He set him up in a comfortable apartment, and bought him new clothes and the finest boxing equipment. Joe was also given pocket money to take care of his simple desires, like ice cream sodas and bright ties.

Louis was ready to turn professional, but Roxborough had other plans. It was a stroke of genius when Jack Blackburn was hired to teach and train Joe. Blackburn had been one of the greatest fighters who ever lived. Only a lightweight, he had fought heavyweights and knocked them senseless. Blackburn had another qualification for the job in addition to his own boxing experience: He was tough enough to control Louis, and he would still be tough enough if Joe became famous.

Joe won five amateur bouts under Blackburn's guiding hand, but they spent more than a thousand hours preparing for those bouts. Blackburn would later recall, "Chappie [they always called each other Chappie] was kinda green when I got him, and he was likely to trip over his own feet. But he could kill you with his left jab. I figured, *man, if he can hit that hard with a jab, what can he do with his right?*" Blackburn objected to the decision to turn Joe professional in the summer of 1934. He felt that Joe needed "some more polishing."

Roxborough set the pattern for Louis' entire career before his first professional fight with two decrees: Joe Louis would never fight preliminary bouts, only main events, and he would never be paid a predetermined amount. Instead, he would always get a percentage of the total gate receipts. The result was millions of dollars in earnings. For his first professional bout, Louis received only $52, but less than one year later, he would receive over $100,000 for fighting Primo Carnera.

Blackburn laid out the fight plan for Louis' professional debut, and Joe carried it out. The victim, Jack Kracken, was carried out a scant two minutes after he had hopped into the ring. That quick knockout of Kracken launched the fastest and most dramatic rise to fame in the history of professional boxing.

Louis was worked hard. He fought an average of twice a month, and after only 10 months, he had run up a string of 22 consecutive victories, 18 by knockout. And within those 10 months, the deadly fists of the man they now called "The Brown Bomber" had brought international fame. Louis received hundreds of letters each week, some from places like New Zealand, Samoa, and Lapland. Joe Louis had become the inspiration for black men everywhere. Each time he fought, black ghettos from Harlem to San Francisco rocked with joy.

He was 21 years old when he knocked out his first important foe, former heavyweight champion Carnera, in six bloody rounds. The name Louis was so intriguing to New York fans that they filled Yankee

Stadium to see him demolish what remained of Carnera.

Roxborough and Blackburn cut Louis' pace to an average of one fight a month. He knocked out King Levinsky in one round in Chicago, then returned to New York's Yankee Stadium to stop another former heavyweight champion, Max Baer, in four rounds. Louis' purse for those four rounds amounted to $241,000 [the equivalent of $3.2-million in 2003.]

Joe Louis rarely smiled. They called him "Deadpan" and "Poker Face." They also called him "Killer." One day, a reporter asked Louis how it feels to beat up another man. Joe replied, "Those guys I fight are wanting to beat me up as bad as they can, so I can't feel sorry when I beat them up. I don't like to hurt nobody, but it's my job. I try to do it best as I can."

Jack Johnson was the only black man ever to win the heavyweight championship. When Louis inched closer and closer to duplicating the feat, Johnson resented it. He publicly branded Louis "a clumsy greenhorn who don't even know how to hold his feet right in a fight. Why, that boy would trip and fall on his face if the other guy stepped aside and let him fall instead of holding him up."

Blackburn, who had palled around with Johnson in the old days, was furious. "That big cat never gave nobody any credit," Blackburn told a Chicago sportswriter. "I ain't taking anything away from Johnson, mind you. He was great in his day. But he wouldn't have no piece of cake fighting Chappie."

The feud reached major proportions. One day, when Johnson tried to get into Louis' training camp at Pompton Lakes, New Jersey, he was stopped at the gate. "You ain't wanted around here," a burly bodyguard told the immortal former champion.

Louis liked opponents who walked into him because he was able to counterpunch with such blinding speed and deadly effectiveness. He disliked opponents who stayed at long range and boxed him. The few authorities who remained unconvinced about Joe's ability claimed that he was a mechanical fighter whom Jack Blackburn operated like a puppet. They predicted that the first time something did not go exactly according to plan, Joe would be a lost soul in the ring. Blackburn brushed the whole thing off with a gruff, "Them cats don't know what they're talking about. Chappie has to hit a guy just once. That's all, man. He just has to hit him one time!"

The dispute was settled on the night of June 19, 1936, at Yankee Stadium. The man in the villain's role was the third former heavyweight champion Joe fought, Max Schmeling. The German Schmeling was a 30-year-old mechanical man whose worn parts had been overhauled for this last attempt to regain his former prestige. Although Max had passed his 30th birthday, he had the body of a man 23 or 24. He also had a good head on his shoulders. Schmeling was a student of the boxing art who learned from experience. He also learned from watching motion pictures.

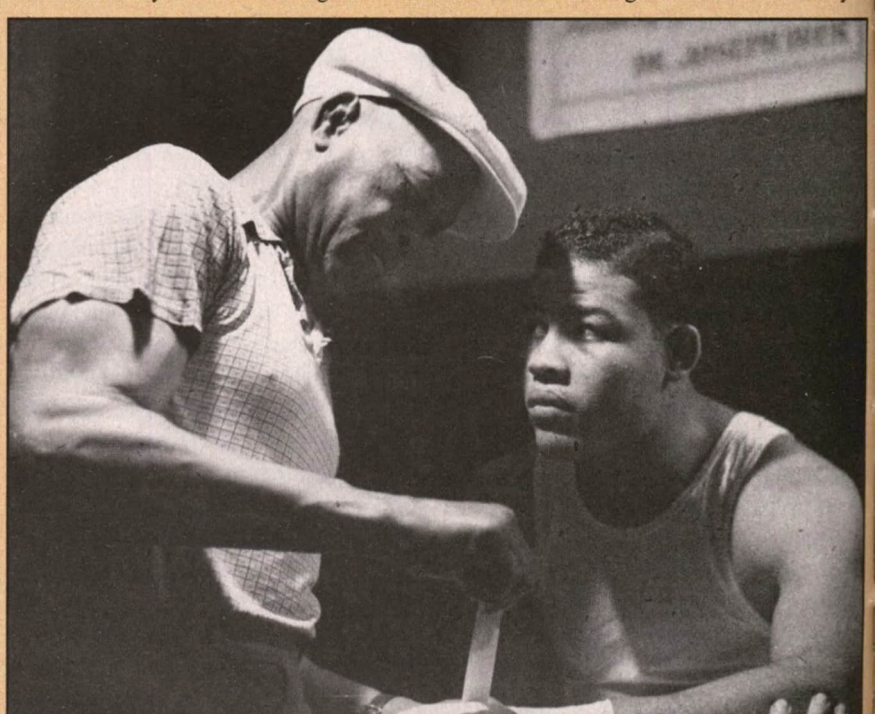
One day, a crate of films were delivered to Schmeling's training camp. They were movies of every filmed fight Louis had. Max ordered them run and rerun. As he watched Louis destroy one victim after another, Max jotted down notes on small strips of paper. He used up many strips while watching Louis pound Max Baer.

It is history that Schmeling knocked Louis unconscious in the 12th round with a right to the jaw, snapping Joe's winning streak at 27. It is also history that he had discovered a weakness in Joe's defense from watching the films. He noticed that Louis dropped his guard when he threw a jab, exposing the left side of his face for countering rights. Jack Blackburn figured out what Schmeling was trying to do in the early rounds, but there wasn't time to change the battle plan he had drilled into Louis. Joe had been "programmed" to fight one way only, and he had to live or die with that one way.

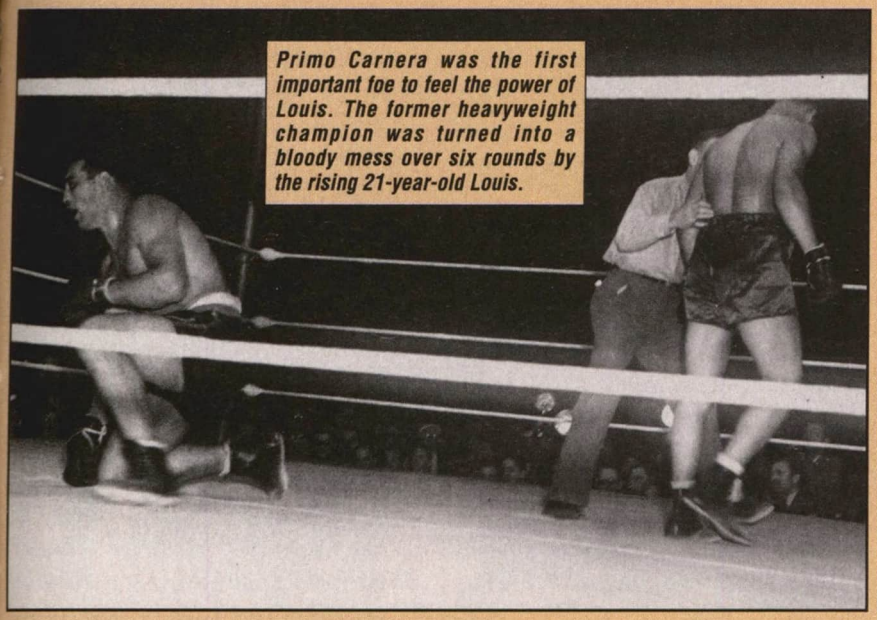
The doubters rose up in glee. "There, we told you so. Louis is a mechanical man. He's a robot!"

Since both Louis and Schmeling were gunning for a fight with heavyweight champion Jimmy Braddock, the right thing to do would have been to reward Schmeling with the title fight. It didn't happen that way, despite Max's cries of protest. Promoter Mike Jacobs, the most powerful man in boxing, had reasons to dislike Germans. He also had reasons to protect Joe Louis and to try his best to make him champion.

Schmeling was sidelined with promises, while Joe's confidence was being rebuilt with a string of five consecutive knockout victories. Among those victims was yet



Louis benefited greatly from the master touch of tough trainer Jack Blackburn. The champion never questioned the advice of his mentor, who had been a great lightweight.



Primo Carnera was the first important foe to feel the power of Louis. The former heavyweight champion was turned into a bloody mess over six rounds by the rising 21-year-old Louis.

another former heavyweight champion, Jack Sharkey.

Sharkey was 34 and balding when he stepped into the ring with Louis. There was a band of excessive flesh around his waist, and he looked old enough to be Joe's father. But for a $50,000 guarantee, Sharkey was willing to take a chance. A couple of lefts and rights to head and body folded the ex-champion in the third round. Sharkey was philosophical in his dressing room after the fight.

"He's good, all right," Sharkey said. "But I wonder how good he'll be when he's 34 and fighting somebody who is 22. It happens to all of us. It was my turn tonight. Some night it will be Joe's turn."

Joe Louis was a little over 23 years old when he fought 32-year-old Jim Braddock for the heavyweight championship of the world at Chicago's Comiskey Park. Joe was established as a 5-to-1 favorite when the fight was signed for the night of June 22, 1937. The only man among Joe's close advisers who had any reservations about Braddock was Jack Blackburn. He cautioned Joe that Braddock was experienced and that he had a right that was as good as Schmeling's. Blackburn, however, wasn't nearly as concerned about the champion's experience and right hand as he was about his courage. "This is one cat who you ain't gonna scare, Chappie," Blackburn told Louis. "Jim Braddock ain't gonna quit, eitha. You're gonna have to knock him out."

Braddock fought exactly the way Blackburn had predicted. He boxed beautifully and he circled away from Louis' power. In the first round, Braddock brought the crowd to its feet when he floored The Brown Bomber with a snapping right to the jaw. Louis' eyes rolled as they had rolled in the Schmeling fight. He looked toward his corner and saw Blackburn motioning him to stay down.

"Take nine!" Blackburn yelled.

Joe beat the count and lasted the round. From that time until the finish, it was a matter of chopping down the brave Braddock. He fell, finally, in the eighth round, and Louis was proclaimed the new heavyweight champ of the world.

The next day, there was a victory party for Joe at the Morrison Hotel. When Louis was called on to say a few words, he spoke what was in his heart: "I don't want to be called champ until I lick Max *Smelling*."

But Mike Jacobs wasn't anxious to give Schmeling another crack at Louis' inviting jaw. Mike continued to stall the German, who, by this time, was enraged. From Germany came reports that Max was being discriminated against simply because he was a good German. Adolf Hitler lent the weight of his name to the accusation by inviting Schmeling and his wife to dine with him at his mountain retreat in Bavaria.

A second Louis-Schmeling fight was inevitable. The world demanded to see it, and Mike Jacobs was a cunning businessman. He would arrange the match. But big

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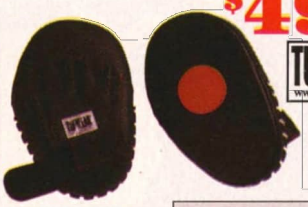

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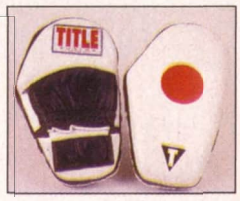

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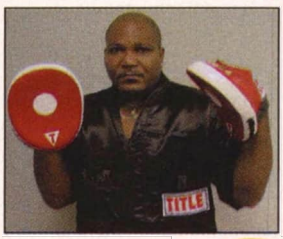

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paydays against lesser risks than Schmeling would come first. Louis looked rather inept against tough Welshman Tommy Farr in August 1937, and the decision that went to Louis at the end of 15 rounds was roundly booed. Joe received $102,000 for the Farr fight, and he earned it. He received $40,000 for knocking out Nathan Mann in three rounds, but only $17,000 for kayoing Harry Thomas in five rounds.

Louis felt uncomfortable fighting guys like Mann and Thomas when everybody said he should be fighting Schmeling. The talk Louis heard that he was afraid of Schmeling cut deeply into his pride. He wanted only Schmeling. In later years, Joe would say that the only men he ever really disliked were Schmeling and Tony Galento. When he finally got his wish and saw Schmeling standing across the ring, there was murder in Louis' large brown eyes.

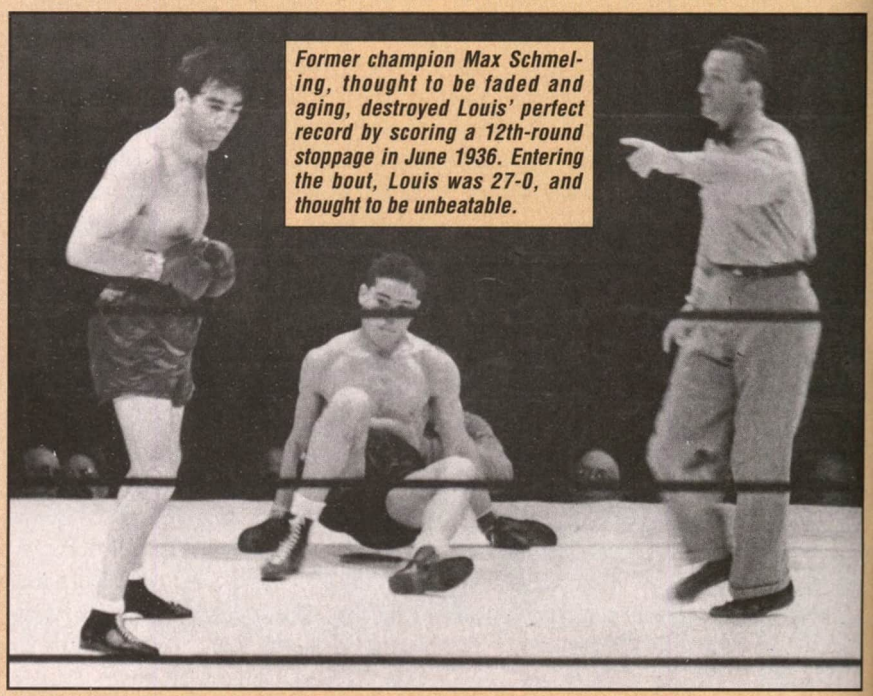
More than 85,000 people jammed Yankee Stadium on the night of June 22, 1938, to see if Louis had improved since the last time Schmeling had been in the opposite corner. It was the largest crowd of Joe's career, and his only million-dollar gate. It was also the highlight of Joe's extraordinary career.

Experts still debate whether the Louis of the second Schmeling fight could have beaten the Dempsey of the Jess Willard fight. The answer will never be known, but what is known is that Joe Louis was just about unbeatable the night he destroyed Schmeling in only two minutes and four seconds of the first round. Max never had a chance to even think about throwing his famous right. He was up and down like a ball, and when he turned his back on Louis to save himself, Joe exploded a left hook into Max's side that put him in the hospital with what was thought to be a fractured vertebra.

There was a victory party that night, and when Louis was asked to speak, he got up and said six words: "Now you can call me Champ."

The whole world called him "Champ." He bought his mother a new home in Detroit, he put some of his brothers and sisters through college, and he tried to learn how to play golf. That was a mistake. He could hit a ball out of sight, but Joe had trouble on the greens, and that cost him a fortune. Joe liked to bet on himself on the golf course. But there was money to burn. What was the difference if he blew a few thousand on a balmy spring morning?

The magic in Louis' name was tremendous. When he would weigh in on the afternoon of a fight, people lined up at dawn just to get a glimpse of him as he was hurried inside the building. As many as 10,000 peo-



Former champion Max Schmeling, thought to be faded and aging, destroyed Louis' perfect record by scoring a 12th-round stoppage in June 1936. Entering the bout, Louis was 27-0, and thought to be unbeatable.

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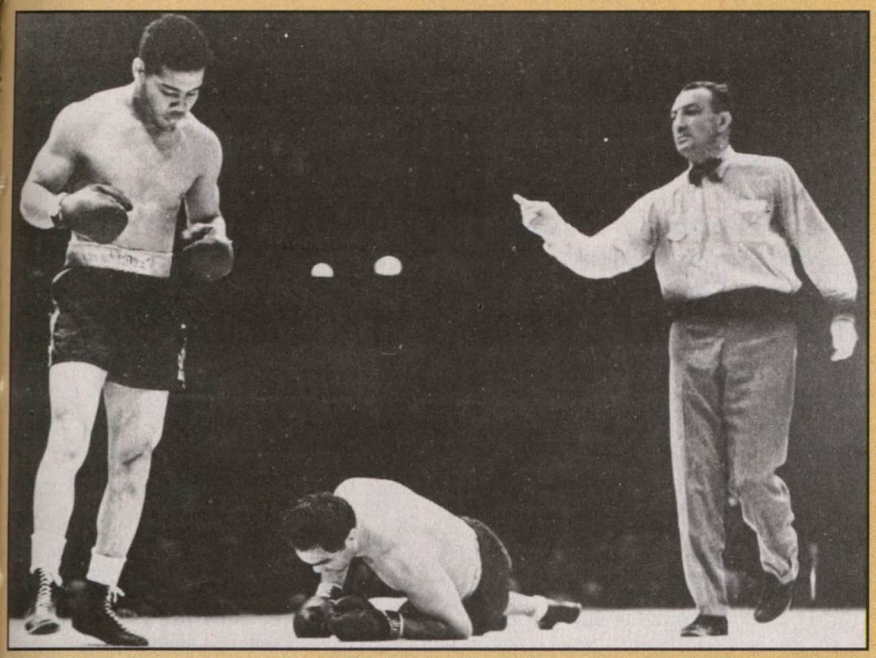

Louis secured sweet revenge in June 1938, when he massacred Schmeling in one round in front of 85,000 fans at Yankee Stadium. With Adolf Hitler boosting Schmeling as an example of Aryan supremacy, the significance of the fight transcended boxing.

ple lined the streets around Madison Square Garden when Louis weighed in for a fight in the Garden or at one of New York's big ballparks. Mike Jacobs once said, "I can sell out the Garden at five bucks a head just to let them see Louis step on a scale and get his pulse taken by the doctor."

From 1939 thru 1942, Louis defended his title 17 times, winning all but two by knockout. Arturo Godoy lasted the full 15 rounds, and Buddy Baer was disqualified. Louis fought both Godoy and Baer in return bouts, and knocked them out. The second Baer fight took place at Madison Square Garden on January 9, 1942. Joe donated his entire purse to the U.S. Navy Relief Fund.

Before the fight, Jack Blackburn, who had suffered a series of heart attacks and was far from recovered, surprised Joe when he said a few minutes before Joe was called to the ring, "Chappie, I don't think I can make it up them steps tonight."

Louis looked down at his old friend and put his arm on Blackburn's shoulder.

"Chappie," Joe said in a firm but soft voice, "you'll only have to walk up and down them stairs one time."

Blackburn walked into the ring to prepare his masterpiece for battle. And his masterpiece hit Buddy Baer on the chin in the first round with one of the hardest punches he ever landed. Baer fell like he was dead. Louis had kept his word.

Louis joined the Army in 1942 during the height of World War II and boxed exhibitions around the world. He was the hottest attraction on the U.S.O. circuit, hotter than Bob Hope, Betty Grable, and Glenn Miller. He visited hospitals, signed autographs, and let war-weary veterans tap him playfully on the chin.

"Man, am I lucky I don't have to fight you," Joe would tell the soldier as he pulled back his fist.

Louis was joined on his tour of military bases by handsome Billy Conn, the man who had given him the fight of his life in June 1941. Everybody agreed that Conn would have taken Joe's title had he not tried to slug it out with Louis in the 13th round. Billy was ahead on points, but felt that he just had to try for a knockout. Conn wound up with his face in the canvas.

But Louis and Conn became great friends. It was a friendship built on mutual respect. They fought again, after they were discharged from the service, but the bout was terribly disappointing. It was pathetically obvious that their years in the Army had sapped their reflexes. Louis won again, this time with an eighth-round knockout.

While his reflexes weren't what they had

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been, and the flesh that once clung like a glove to his body now hung loosely, Joe Louis could still knock out any man he hit. He knocked out Tami Mauriello in one round, but he couldn't catch shifty Joe Walcott. When Louis got the decision in their December 1947 fight, everybody thought Walcott had been robbed. In a return bout six months later, Walcott was finally caught by the shadow of what had been the deadly Brown Bomber. It was still a good enough shadow to flatten Walcott in the 11th round.

Despite the millions of dollars his fists had earned, Joe Louis was financially insecure. He was also in trouble with the tax men. To keep a steady flow of money rolling in, Joe toured the country giving four-round exhibitions. In November 1948, he had 11 exhibitions in cities from New Haven to New Orleans. There was still enough magic in the name Joe Louis to sell out the local fight arena.

But he still held the title, and pressure was brought to bear for him to defend it. Out of condition and "feelin' old," Louis decided to retire while still champion. The official announcement came on March 1, 1949, and Joe resumed his fast-paced exhibition tour.

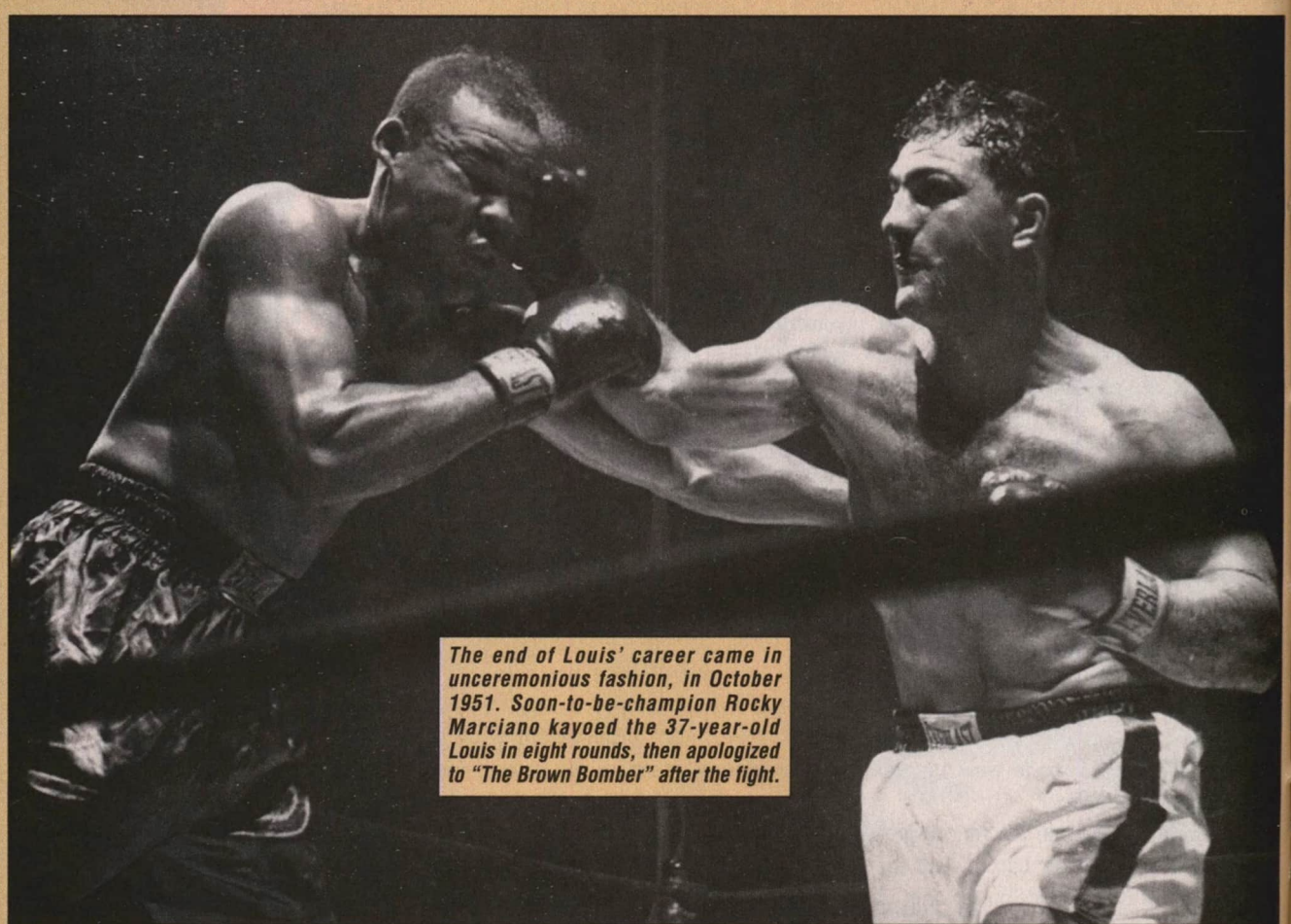
Meanwhile, Ezzard Charles won the elimination tournament to determine Louis' successor. Charles was called the champion, but no man could really believe he was champion until he licked Joe Louis. Soon, Louis was induced to fight again. He needed the money. Period. All the talk about him wanting to regain his title was hogwash. Charles outpointed Joe in a dull 15-rounder in September 1950.

"Quit now, Joe," his friends pleaded. But the need for money became increasingly critical, and how else could Joe Louis earn money except by offering the shell of himself as a sacrifice? He beat a lot of guys named Brion, Savold, Agramonte, and Beshore. Fine, Joe. Let it go at that. Quit now. For God's sake, Joe, quit!

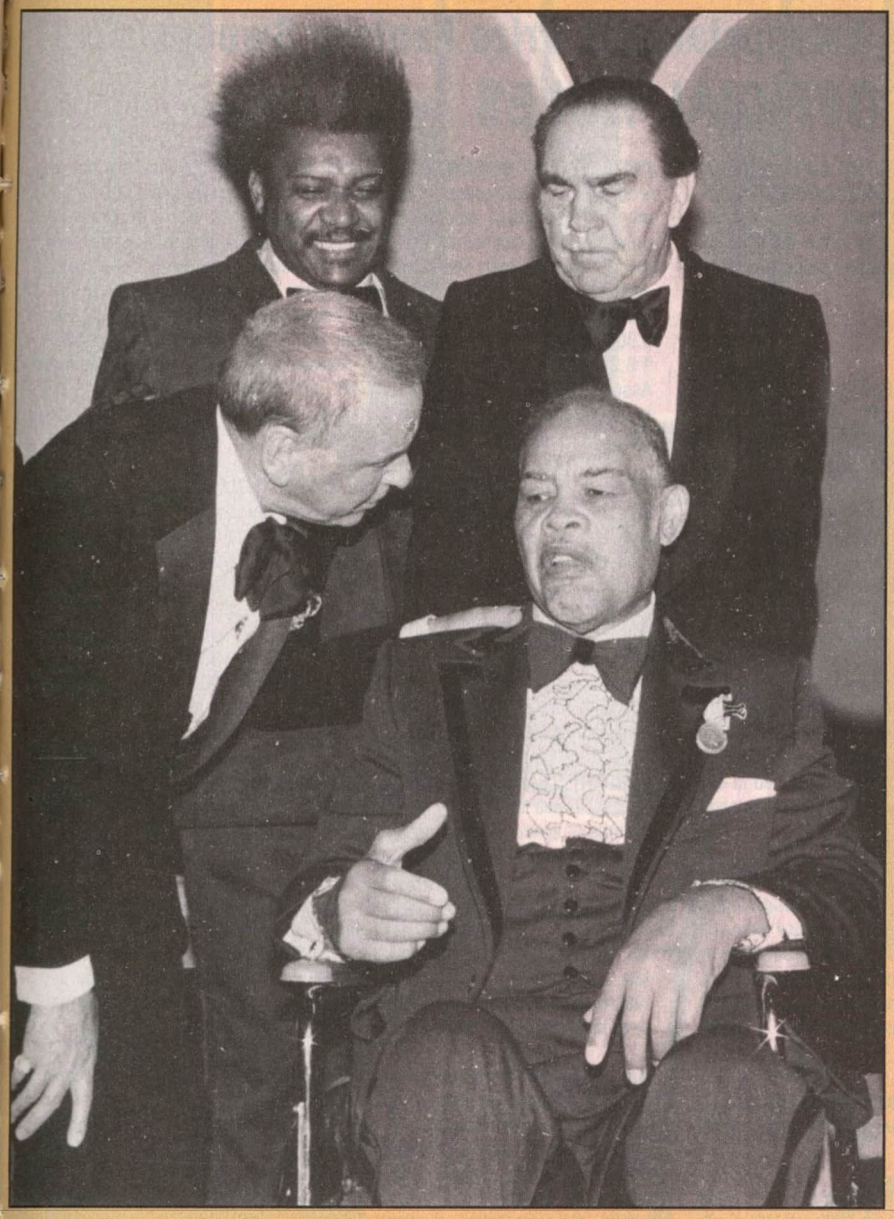
But even the greatest of champions had to have that one last fight. In the case of Joe Louis, the last one was against a bull of a man named Rocky Marciano. It was a terrible thing to watch. Joe fought as bravely as he had ever fought, but the mountain of muscle in the ring with him on that night of October 26, 1951, seemed indestructible. Louis was stopped in the eighth round and even Marciano apologized for what had happened.

The good Lord blessed Joseph Louis Barrow with some of the finest fighting equipment ever seen. But He seemed to have shortchanged Joe in business luck. Louis tried to secure his future with ventures in everything from real estate to soda pop called "Joe Louis Punch." That fizzled, too. Louis and the dollar were not made for each other. And then there was the Internal Revenue Service, which always seemed to be hounding Joe for money he didn't have.

Louis tried professional wrestling. That embarrassed people, and they didn't pay to see him make a spectacle of himself. In



The end of Louis' career came in unceremonious fashion, in October 1951. Soon-to-be-champion Rocky Marciano kayoed the 37-year-old Louis in eight rounds, then apologized to "The Brown Bomber" after the fight.



In his later years, Louis struggled financially and was cared for by friends like Frank Sinatra. Behind Louis are promoter Don King and former rival Schmeling.

1969, Joe and his foe-turned-friend, Billy Conn, joined in a business venture. They received nationwide publicity from the press and television. But the next day, Louis collapsed and was rushed to a hospital. Now the press and television people quickly prepared his obituary. They had to be ready, just in case.

When he left the hospital a few days later, Louis seemed fully recovered from what was described first as a "heart attack" and later as "exhaustion." But he looked old and drawn. Although only 55 years old, Joe Louis looked like a man of 65. A young boy walked up and asked Joe for his autograph as he walked slowly down the hospital steps. He seemed to be in pain as he scrawled out his name on a piece of paper.

The boy smiled when Joe patted him on the head, and Joe smiled, too. Then the boy rejoined his friends who were standing nearby. "I bet Joe Louis could have whipped Cassius Clay," he said.

Louis overheard what the boy said and he smiled again. "Don't bet on anything," Louis told the youngster. "Especially on something like that. Cassius is a very good fighter."

That's Joe Louis. That's class. ■

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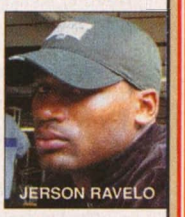

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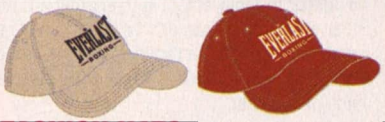

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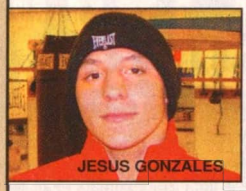

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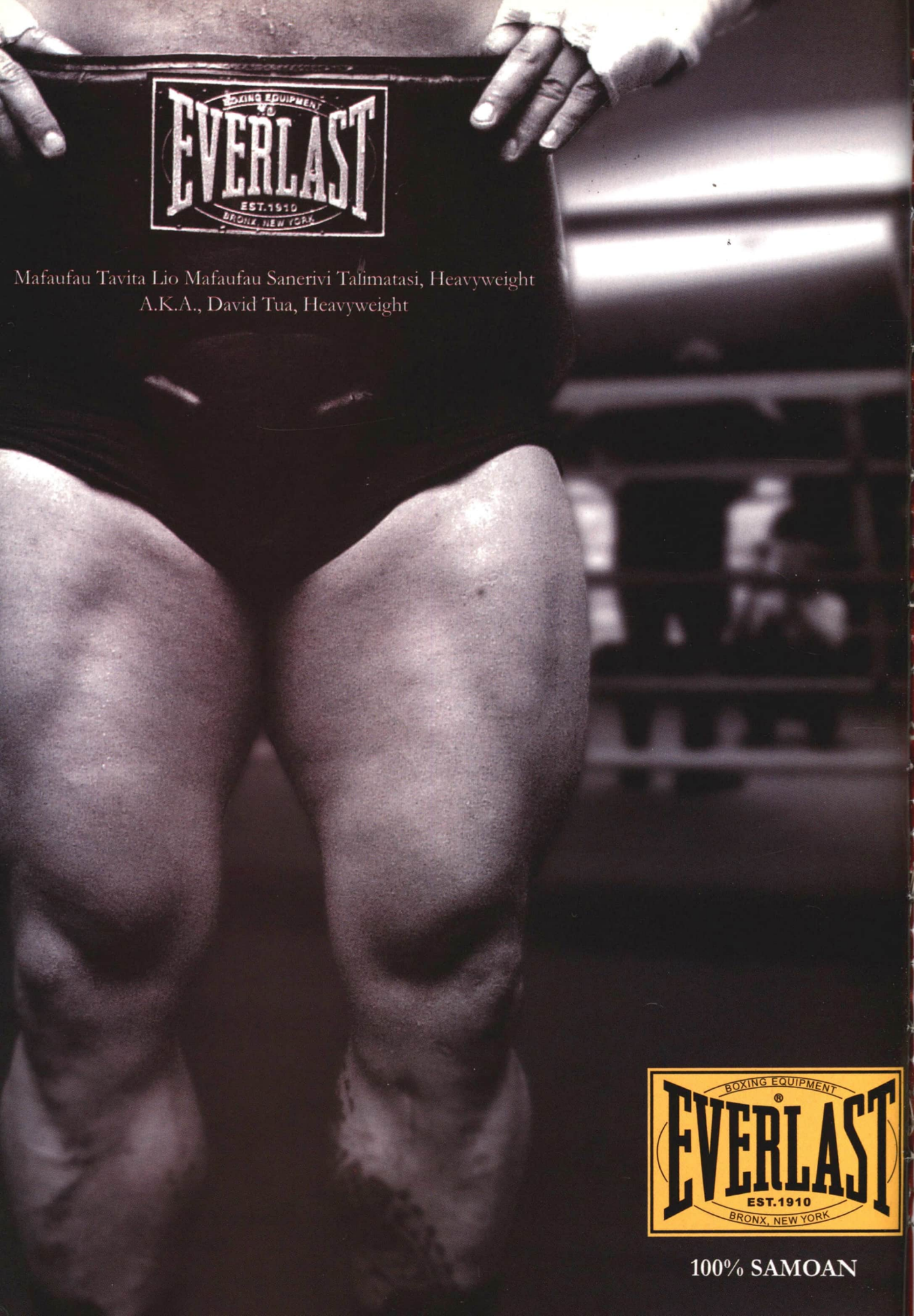

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A.K.A., David Tua, Heavyweight

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